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THE IRON MUSE

BY

JOHN CURTIS UNDERWOOD



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an 1824 sketch 34

To
HERSELF

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FOREWORD

HE whose word is life incarnate, who through
countless ages grows,
To a world of evolution more and more His labors
shows;
More and more in man His image His eternal purpose
knows:

Who through pain and toil enduring, Tubal Cain's
first hammers wrought,
Piled the Pyramids, and slowly Rome from civic chaos
brought,
Taught the slow approach of science to the citadels of
thought.

Avatars of the Almighty first to mortal eyes revealed
When a camp-fire first was kindled, when Achilles
raised his shield;
Learned to paint as Raphael painted, God in infant
flesh concealed;
Learned to gaze with Galileo, learned to see as Newton
saw
Starry space a serried army of unalterable law;
Learned from nature's last recesses Delphic words of
life to draw.

Foreword

Taught to-day to sift the atom, grasp the germ and
probe the soul,
Wrap the earth in rails of steel and wires that thrill
from pole to pole,
Baffle death and ride the whirlwind; God and man
draw near their goal.

Avatars of the Almighty, surgeon, chemist, engineer,
Preach to-day a new Evangel. Air-ships soar, His
angels. Fear
Fails and fades; for man holds heaven in his hands
to-day and here.

THE IRON MUSE

THE IRON MUSE

I—THE GOD IN THE MACHINE

THE PRESS ROOM

HERE are the tables of the law, to-day in steel
decreed;
The last supreme commandment, "Thou shalt
strenuously succeed."
The roaring presses multiply their Maker's restless
will,
His powers and portents magnify, His creatures cure
and kill.

The depths of ocean feel the stir these iron scribes
translate.
The ends of earth are garnered bare to swell their
aggregate.
Famine and plague are measured out and traders'
prices rise.
And war's red sponge of wreck and rout their problem
simplifies.

The Press Room

From black and formless chaos the lines of type defile.
Their columns massed are marching to their symphony
of style,
Through a discipline of thunder where the Titans
swart are chained,
And the presses close and sunder; to their triumph
foreordained.

The seas give up their secrets. The hills send down
their gold
Herein to be accounted for, and weighed, and tried,
and told.
And human hopes and prayers and fears, and loves
and lusts are wrought
Into the lasting fabric of the nation's noblest thought.

Beneath the flimsy patterns and the proof-sheets of
to-day
They are printing here to-morrow through the months
of long delay;
The averages eternal that balance year by year,
While stars and things supernal draw slowly near and
clear.

As nerves of sight and sentience will telegraph the
brain
The impulse and the warning of unreckoned joy and
pain;
To lurk in convolutions gray where germs of thought
are stored,
Until the will asserts its sway and chooses from its
hoard:

So in the pregnant travail of the press room's fever
heat,
There broods where ocean cables and the wires of
nations meet;
Omniscience making all things good through wars of
creed and clan
And vision sure of brotherhood through strife evolved
in man.

Paris, 5' 13 '08.

THE BRIDGE

SCOUTING the trail to the shortest ferry the cave men first were its pioneers.

Lake dwellers grounded a rawhide wherry, sounded
the shallows where stand these piers.

Warriors and workers, clans and nations, planted their
palisades, drove their piles.

And the Romans builded its broad foundations, raised
its approaches through blood red miles.

And the ages of stone and of iron were ended. And
the world raced on, on its rails of steel,

And the thunders of God from the clouds descended
roll through the wheels that these rivets feel.

"Let there be light," by His lips was spoken, filling
the void where He quenched the sun.

And the silence of the hills was broken. And the arc
lights flamed while the work was done.

Planning a path in the empty air the master hand and
the master brain

Mounted the night as one mounts a stair, measured
each torsion, thrust, and strain:

Spinning his spider web of steel, breasted the whirl-
wind, wrestled through.

And the elements man's will shall feel. And their
race and their rage are curbed anew.

This is our talisman and sign. This is our arch of a triumph vast.

For the brute is cowed by the voice divine. The future mounts and o'errides the past.

Over the girders the wires shall run, racing the trains through the midnight hurled.

Heralds of thought they outstrip the sun; and they bear man's records around the world.

Vibrant and strong as the wheels go rolling, out of the storm comes a symphony

Sure as the eye that the train controlling gauges the pressure of days to be.

Babes unborn in their mothers sleeping, thoughts undreamed in the poet's brain,

Wealth of the world in His single keeping stream through the storm as He drives His train.

Out of the night comes the snarl of the river. Though the beast is bound, he is strong to slay.

And the girders rock till they seem to shiver. And the winds shall winnow the weak away.

Now is your trial and your hour of trembling, perils of flaws and of shifting sand;

Souls that must pass, now is no dissembling. Say have ye built so your bridge shall stand?

Seattle, 9' 12 '09.

THE RAILROAD

I AM the trail that your fathers have followed
westward from sea to sea.

I am the skeleton grim you have fashioned to trouble
the days to be;

King of the genii loosed from my prison, in the mines
that your greed has revealed;

Reek of the breath of the wrath of Jehovah from the
vials that your haste has unsealed.

I am inertia of matter and motion, of wheels rolling on
through the night;

Æon on æon of long evolution through darkness
advancing to light;

Pressure of millions of men and of women, that want
and oppression and wrong

Thrust over seas to the west, to the prairies where the
weak shall have space to grow strong.

I am the impulse that stirs in your pulses, the vital
unrest of the race

Crushing the hours into seconds and striving to com-
pass the conquest of space:

Power that forces an outlet, expansion that circles the
planet, that spreads

Plowing the prairie, and felling the forests, and tramp-
ling the white water sheds.

Snow peak and city are waked by my whistles. I am
as sleepless as death;
Strong as the lava that flows from the mountains.
Nor may I pause to take breath
More than the earth in its orbit unending, the growth
of the grain that I bear
Forth from the fields to the seas, to the steamers, that
the nations that hunger may share.

Last of the powers of nature and swiftest and
strongest; her master and son,
Cleaving the mountains, and curbing the rivers, and
reaping the desert I run.
I am aggression, extortion, and fraud. By the road
where my highwaymen ride
Tidings and food for their need to the nations I bring,
and my spoils I divide.

I am the steel that is laid on your shoulders, the
scourge that your sins have deserved.
I am the pathway of God's own Evangel. Nor have
His forerunners swerved.
Faster and faster and nearer and nearer He rides to
His triumph with me.
I am His servant as strong and enduring and sure as
His tides in His sea.

Paris, 10' 31 '08.

THE AIR-SHIPS

THEY are coming, earth crowds closer. Man that
crept, that slept, shall soar;
For the teeming millions' pressure thrusts us upward
more and more.
From the spirit's lowest sources life in spate is rising
high;
Floods the cities, reaps the desert, seeks the conquest
of the sky.

They are coming, war and havoc hover low and weight
their wings;
Death, destruction, rapine, pillage, till we rise to higher
things.
Flames of cities lit like torches still shall serve to show
the way,
We the race have won toward heaven since the first
primordial day.

Senseless atom, sponge, medusa, polyp, fish and snake
and ape;
Still existence winds its spiral, breasts the trail to
higher shape.
Still the zigzags reach and widen, still the outlook
gains and grows.
Birds, our scouts and heralds, lead us till man's soul
its mission knows.

Ages long of evolution, centuries of history,
Lead us conquerors and captives to the day that sets
 us free;
Till life's pilgrims, eyes uplifting, see the dawn begin
 to wake
Near the holy mountain's summit; till the slaves their
 shackles break.

Unessential weight refining, casting off; the vital speed
Of the motor's pulse increasing, throbbing harder; we
 shall need

Stronger hearts and surer vision. Some shall fall.
 But man shall reign,
Halt and struggle, rise and triumph, heaven's out-
 works here attain.

They are coming; unknown forces shall avail to lift
 them higher;

Teach our hands to steer, nor tremble, through the
 lightning's shafts of fire;

Ride the storm, and thread the whirlwind's maelstrom
 surely to our goal;

Homeward race through space unerring to the harbors
 of the soul.

Winds of Heaven, high archangels, cleave the clouds
 and wing their flight;

Wider vistas spread by day and wider still illume at
 night;

Till the spirit stripped of matter like a naked athlete
 stands

On the brink of God's black ocean, yielding gladly to
 His hands.

Paris, 11' 16 '08.

THE POWER-HOUSE

HERE have we focussed forces unknown until
to-day.

Here have we hived new powers of flame that swarm
and stream away

Down highways dark where globes of light along the
meadows bloom;

Where lustrous lilies born of night dispel the city's
gloom.

Efficient, brisk, decisive, the master spirit goes,
Reviews his restless regiment of humming dynamos,
His orders gives and vanishes. No thought have such
as he

To glean the golden pollen of the midnight's mystery.
Sufficient for their purpose they brought this thing
to be.

His row of dwarfs distorted an oiler stooping tends
Intent upon the second when his term of bondage
ends.

His fellow slaves that prisoned here shall speed his
flying car;

Shall light his way, and to his ear bring tidings from
afar;

He sees not in the shadow where their ceaseless tread-
mills turn.

He does his share and goes his way. More bright the
arc lights burn.

And men and women walk the streets where once the
lava flared.

And science searching deeper yet than man has done
or dared,

Another cranny in the void to human sight has bared. *

High in His holy city in His power-house vast of space,
The Master of us all looks forth. He sees His planets
race,

His dynamos that generate the thought that comprehends

The infinite; the will that still the finite's grasp
extends;

And love that shall interpret all and greater love beget.

And the powers that dwell in darkness shall be
delivered yet.

He sets His finger to a switch. A world has ceased to
be.

Another flames new born; with it His Son and such as
we.

And light shall dawn on darkest night, and teach blind
eyes to see.

Paris, 11' 11 '08.

THE FOUNDRY

A S dawn darts forth from darkness like the loom of
the rising sun,
The crucible tilts outpouring the lights that leap and
run.
And they blaze as the shadows seize them like new-
born planets cast
To the swaddling clothes that midnight, the midwife
lifts at last.

Like the rush of a lava river, they flare through the
narrow moulds,
Till every sandy cradle a shape of splendor holds.
And the fervor fails and the fever cools, and the heart
of rose grows gray
Till the sand with the thirst of a desert cold has
drained its warmth away.

Slowly they set and harden there as the dreams and
the loves of youth
Cool to the old man's shrunken strength in a world of
wasted truth.
Buried in coffins black they lie, ranged in the barren
sands
Till a day of resurrection sets free strange angels'
hands.

Slowly the workmen lift them up, lifeless and rigid
bars,
Food for the forges roaring loud, and the stuff that
shines in stars;
In red reincarnation again to glow until
They are wrought into keels for steamers and the
wheels of mine and mill.

They are rolled into plates that splinter the shells that
shriek and fly
Through the leagues of the reeling battle line in the
strife of sea and sky.
They are slowly shaped and tempered, whetted to steel
as keen
As the will of the surgeon cleaving surely life and death
between.

They are fashioned a planet's fetters, girders whose
grip shall hold
The bulk of the earth together, crumbling in final cold.
Till the heart of man grows great as fate; till his soul
defies defeat;
Here is his spirit's armor forged in the fires that his
passions heat.

Paris, 4' 21 '08.

THE COAL MINE

GOLD and crimson palely glimmer where their smoky skies are sinking low,
While with eyes that see but dimly from the daylight
and the dawn they go;
Till the darkness of the pit has claimed its own.
There they feel the dull depression of the stirless and
the scentless air.
There is winter's endless midnight but no wind has
ever whispered there
And the spring and fall and summer are unknown.
Lost to them are form and color that all other weary
mortals bless.
All their stolid, pallid faces are unchanging in forgetfulness.
Down the dimly lighted corridors they see
Shapeless shadows, lamps that flicker, fading dreams
of what was long ago.
In the tunnels slowly sinking till at last they meet the
night, they know
All the brightness of the years that are to be.
To a slow and mournful cadence, to the labor of the
breath they draw;
Strong in patience, striking blindly, they have beaten
down the shapes they saw.

So their ears grow deaf to voices from within.
Out of darkness into darkness in the freedom of the
night they reel;
Out of weariness to slumber; and their masters' heavy
hands they feel
Till they see another dreary day begin.

Buried sunshine lost for ages in the blackness of their
quest they find;
Brightness turning night to noonday, heat that warms
the heart of humankind,
Power making man the master of the sea;
Force that fettered not forever, finds fulfillment of it-
self at last,
Steam that coils the cage's cables which have linked
them to the sordid past;
To the future when their souls in strength go free.

New York, 7' 26 '04.

THE MOTOR

JEHU was my grandsire grim. High Jehovah's
child

I was born to bring to you the beckon of the wild;
Framed and fined to send you forth through the flood
of noise
Where the city chokes and sweats; deathless girls and
boys.

I was wrought with Vulcan's art, forged by Tubal
Cain.

Archimedes measured me. Newton's mighty brain
Figured on my formulas. Thor my framework made.
Hermes my forerunner was, god of thieves and trade.

Wherfore in my destined hour I was sent to you;
Speed and subtlety and power, pledge of kingdoms
new,

Herald of the trackless trail to where the angels kneel;
Child of earth's divine desire born of fire and steel;

Thunderbolt of peace and war, chariot swift of God;
I shall reinforce your ranks, open paths untrod;
Bring the dream that never dies to shade the crowded
street,

Swaying boughs to weary eyes in noonday's fever heat.

Ye have filed the planets small. Air shod tires shall
roll

Round my orbits over all earth from pole to pole.

Ye have caged the powers of air; pulsing they respire
Hills of space, creation's stair, mounting high and
higher.

Pioneers and charioteers; who in wantonness
Blindly and benighted steers, sets the pace no less.
Reckless riders for the Throne, one eternal hand
Holds my levers through your own; and man shall
strive and stand.

All the earth is speeded up. Some shall triumph.
Some

Whirling round the racing stars, hurled to kingdom
come,

Scorn the barriers dark of sleep, and storm the gates
of day.

Though our trail is shadowed deep the world is on its
way.

Suva Fiji, 4' 10 '09.

THE SEARCH-LIGHTS

GOD writes His scriptures still to-day. His messages of light
Out of the shadow start and stray away across the night,
Through blinding seconds stop and stay to dazzle mortal sight.

Whether from flaming battleship that hurls the bolts of death,
Or from some tall skyscraper tower while thousands hold their breath
Till the last vote is counted out, His final word He saith;

Whether o'er Afric rivers dark where darker deeds are done,
Or where the red aurora's glare outshines the midnight sun,
Or where an army's iron prayer e'er daybreak has begun:

Ever He sends His ministers. His angels strong to-day,
Soar through the press room's roar, explore the liner's fog-locked way;
New antitoxines ever seek; new credits grant and pay.

He sends His search-lights through the eyes that scan
the depths of space;
That planets weigh and scrutinize. He lends His
servants grace,
His elements to analyze, His working plans to trace.

He sends His search-lights through the sheets men
inked while millions slept;
His new beatitudes repeats till babes that died unwept
In reeking slums and reckless streets, in mercy's arms
have slept.

He sends His search-lights through the soul that
shrivels in its ray,
Till one that from the millions stole shall shrink, and
start away
From focussed eyes that stare nor spare, to thole his
judgment day.

His moving finger points and probes. To worlds un-
born it knows,
Where some dead sun for centuries its final flicker
throws
Across the void as search-lights sweep, His eye unerr-
ing goes.

Paris, 6' 7 '08.

THE TRIP HAMMER

I RISE;

Like the wrath of the Lord, shaking sea and skies,
Gathered and raised like a lifted fist,
Threatening earth like a stormy cloud
Where the snakes of the lightning swarm and twist;
Till the crash of the thunder cries aloud;
And the bolt is loosed, and the levin flies.

I fall;

Like the arm of the Law that is over all.
And the white hot molten metal rains
A shower of sparks through the shadowed air
Like the thrills of a thousand travail pains,
Till the stuff of the soul is beaten bare,
Flailed from its husk, and is sifted small.

I am

In the army of man its battering ram;
Welding the girders that carry the track,
That fetter the void, that rout delay;
Battering storm and the blackness back.
And I forge the keel that shall cleave the spray,
And I raise the real, and I crush the sham.

I mark;
The time of your march from dawn to dark.
And my brothers roll on their iron drums
The sound of the charge, and they summon all
As the hour of your fall or your triumph comes
Sluggard and dreamer, great and small
To the battle of life. You can hear them, Hark!

Paris, 11 '7 '08.

II—THE SEA

THE LIGHTHOUSE

I AM the ocean's finger-post. Hard by its highway side
I watch the long lean liners race; and tossed by wind and tide
I see the anchored fishing boats at straining halters ride.

The storm wind's wolf pack round me raves and gallops through the night.

In line on line of living graves the breakers slaver white,
Till hailstones hurled from cloudy caves their clamors scourge and smite.

Unstirred I stand. My shafts of light a bow shot through the storm

Beat back the murk. Like golden wasps they stab and soar and swarm,
Till sailors' sinking hearts revive; leap up alive and warm.

Ten leagues of sea, ten leagues of shore, my whirling lanterns sweep

With sleepless eyes; and line on line the secrets of the
deep

I read. The blackness is my book while vigils lone I
keep.

Therein a gospel infinite the silences reveal.

I telegraph the truth of it. The song of steam and
steel

I set to scale. I frame the phrase that men and moun-
tains feel.

My beacon baton rules and sways the tempest's
symphony.

In unrevealed unerring ways the elements with me
In unison reiterate, "In service are we free."

I focus force and faith in one. I am night's burning
glass.

I relay wireless messages of love from burnished brass.
I show the spectrum clear of hope to souls that stran-
gling pass.

I am the ocean's finger-post, its pillar at the goal.

Skyward I point where planets all round starlit courses
roll;

Where flaming comets blaze the trails, the orbits of the
soul.

New York, 11' 27 '07.

THE CAPTAIN

No chaffroned charger forth I ride through ringing
lists to reel.

No silver trumpet bids me bide the shock of steeds and
steel.

No golden spur no valor's bride hath bound behind my
heel.

But twice ten thousand horses' might is mine to rule
and ride.

My coursing ground hath utmost bound where ebbs
the polar tide

With glaciers' gleaming palisades upreared on either
side.

They loose their bergs to buffet me, the winds of all the
seas

Come urging surging squadrons out to leave me little
ease.

Their clarions rage, the siren's shout makes symphony
with these.

Sea mark and search-light share my aim till battle's
day be born,

Till all my reeking battleship, her haunches hacked
and torn,

Shall hurl her freight of flying death from out the
bloodshot morn.

Helmed in my conning tower I see the stricken sea
below.

I lash my broadsides through the smoke. Bowed by
some staggering blow

I thrust my last torpedo forth to check a charging foe.

So may I sink, so may I swim. Alone abides for me
The wingèd victory of the wind that rules the restless
sea.

Our lady, steel thy soldiers' hearts with strong sweet
breath of thee.

New York, 10' 5 '05.

THE MINES

WE lurk in your stillest harbors, in your crowded
water ways,
Till the Master's hand that made us has told its tale of
days,
And your strongest ships and captains come charging
swiftly by;
And then we rise and smite them from our ambush
where we lie.

Well may your hard hearts falter and tremble iron
nerves.

A single finger's pressure for scarce a second serves,
And twenty thousand tons of steel and the life and
death it bore

In wreck and ruin red shall reel. And your millions
are no more.

For so in tones of thunder to hardened ears we say,
“For every single sin you sin, in some way you shall
pay.”

And He whose word eternal decrees that wars shall
cease,

Has made us mouths to preach to you the dearer price
of peace.

So shall you guard your bodies in peril and distress,
While the many toil and hunger; that one in wanton-
ness

May win to wealth and mastery; who most of all has
failed.

Hath He not mined your spirits too, whose strong-
holds are assailed?

Paris, 11' 9 '08.

THE FOG

I AM the reek of the days that were and the breath
of the days to be.
All the ghosts of the ages swarm and stir when my
hosts march in from sea;
Till they sink as the twilight falls afar, and a deeper
shade is laid
On the sodden sands, and the stricken lands grow still
and sore afraid,
And I muffle the siren's warning note and I baffle the
lighthouse beam.
And the greasy rails down their long blind trails feel
the slackening strength of steam.
And the wheels turn slow and the fires grow low.
 City and countryside
Choke in my grip, and sea and ship, where my still
gray squadrons ride.

And I pearl the long gray grasses by the buried sea-
man's graves.
Incense of unseen masses I lift from my lone sea caves,
To the sound of a sigh that passes in the hush of the
winds and waves.
And I brood in the silence, lingering under the shroud
of night
As a widowed mother waits for the birth that brings
her babe to light,

On earth till the birth of the flowers of spring and the
blue bird's nesting call.

And I crouch till the stars grow clear again, till the
bars of the morning fall;

Till I kiss the cheek of a child that smiles e'er the sun
stands lord of all.

For I am the darkness, the doubt, the dread that stifle
your hopes and prayers,

I am the fears of your fathers dead, and their mothers'
tears and cares.

I am the lives that start and lurk when the brightest
noon burns dim

In the shadows cold, in the mist and murk of the slum's
blind menace grim.

I am the strong man's well of strength, and the ford
where the coward falls,

And the gate that shall wait for all at length through
the everlasting walls;

Spores as of hoarfrost sifted o'er the fruitful field of
night;

Shreds of a banner rifted where dying heroes fight;
Or a curtain caught and lifted when you wake to a

world of light.

S. S. Amerika, I' 7 '07.

THE WAVE

OUT of the darkness of time and the stress of an
impulse unending,
Out of the deep I arise, and shoreward unresting I
roll;

Till the breaker resounds on the beach and it curls
and it crashes descending,
And rending the sands it subsides; and is scattered
and swept from its goal.

I am the impact of light on your eyes, and the glow
and the gleam of the vision.

I am a second of sound and the echo that stirs in
the brain;
And the past that awakes and regrets and aspires; and
the hope of a harbor Elysian,
Lost and recalled and disowned and restored,
through a lifetime of passion and pain.

I am the march of events past the purpose that cradles
creation;

And the end of your millions of lives like the foam
bells that whiten and fade;
And the roll of the drums down the ranks, and the
charge of the steel crested wrath of a nation.

I am the wailing of women that bury their dead in
the shade.

I am the round of the seasons; the rose of the summer
unfolding;

- Swelling of sap in the spring, and its shrinkage
when winter turns white.
- I am the song of your youth, and your autumn its
bleakness beholding,
- I am the burden and the heat of the day, and the
shadows and dreams of the night.
- I am the beat of your heart, and the breath that you
draw when the morning
Rises in fire on the hills; and the setting of moon,
and of sun.
- I am the crest of to-day, and the fortune that fails
without warning;
And the triumph that fades; and the struggle with
death; and the rest when the battle is done.
- I am the spray that is scattered; the laughter and loves
of the city.
- I am the darkness below and the lives that the
weight of the world shall sustain.
- I am the sorrow that sobs in the sea, and the tides of
an infinite pity;
And the whisper of winds, and the smile of a child,
. and the ripple and rush of the rain.
- I am the passion whose strength is a snare, and the
love whose redemption is friendless,
- I am your soul's resurrection from sin and from
shame and the grave;
- Growth of the grain, and the travail of life that toils
through eternities endless.
- I am the pulse of the cosmos whose life is to God as
a wave.

Paris, 11' 25 '08.

BEYOND THE SEA

BEYOND the sea the sun goes down.
The gray gulls follow in his wake.
There towering ships their cargoes take,
There troop the clouds. There would I be
In some fantastic foreign town,
Where waves on coral beaches break;
And brawny boatmen, bare and brown,
Ply through the surf beyond the sea.

Beyond the sea they traffic there
In ambergris and frankincense;
Strange furs that floor barbaric tents,
And ostrich eggs and ivory;
And sandalwood and camel's hair;
And uncut rubies, rare, immense;
That women round their foreheads wear
In wonderlands beyond the sea.

Beyond the sea the temple bells
Are calling Buddhist priests to prayer.
There war drums tear the tropic air.
The monsoon sighs incessantly;
The mueddin calls, the jackal yells,
The serpent charmer's fife is there.
And still the mingled murmur swells
And fills my ears beyond the sea.

From every weary breaker wells
Resistlessly, implacably;
In every heart forever dwells;
Unsatisfied, beyond the sea.

Long Beach, 2' 26 '04.

THE COAL PASSERS

FULL speed it is. The gauges rise. Each lip of
vivid rose
That grins around its furnace door, intense, insistent,
glows,
Fast gape and glut the mouths of fire. Hearts in hot
haste shall beat.
And lungs shall strain to drink and drain the torment
tides of heat.
For wind and wave have lift them up to rave against
our way,
And we that heed our engines' need their iron law
obey.

This was the law that once we saw afar and unawares.
Now every yawning molten maw the gate of judgment
flares.

Stripped to the waist we hurl in haste the black, the
naked soul,
To feed the fast devouring flame that leaps to lick the
coal.
Earth's power-house is stoked in hell. None knew it
more than we
That drive ten thousand tons along a thousand leagues
of sea.

Ten thousand tons, a thousand lives, a world that
holds its course
By night and day through fog and fray of waves, and
braves their force;
Unerring as the planet's sweep athwart the gulf of
sky.

This was the tale that once we told to girls in days
gone by.

Midmost a silver sea we hung, the winds, the world
asleep;

While silver stars in order swung across the upper
deep.

Those starry nights, those harbor lights, those girls
with eager eyes

Must watch and wait alone and late, till love deluded
dies.

Bare in the blinding furnace glare our heritage we
know,

Held fast upon one half-inch plate. A mile of sea
below

Drops black and sheer and deadly near. Grip tight
the brands that burn,

And seethe and sear, to banish fear; till faith and
hope return.

Though we to harlot ports have thrown our youth, our
years away;

And squandered more than was our own, we may be
men to pay.

Our drunken eyes by pain made wise, here wings of
fire shall see;

The Coal Passers

That veil a shrine where halos shine, where high
archangels be.
Not all of us shall sink to shame; my brothers born to
strife,
The wrestle of the winds and flame; the firing line of
life.

New York, 12' 9 '03.

THE LINER

WHEN the world in the womb of the midnight
weighed the High God moulded me.

And He fined my lines to a scale He made or e'er was
air or sea;

Or harbors or ocean lanes He laid on the chart of a
world to be.

When He breathed on the void with the breath of life,
e'er He quickened the soul of man;

E'er He whetted His will as one whets a knife; while
the lava rivers ran;

The shell of my hull in His hills He hid till the iron
years began.

Out of His spirit's treasures His dauntless captains
came.

Out of His hoards on the mountainside His miners
fed the flame.

From the bridal red of coal and steel I sped His tides
to tame.

Man that hath bridled and saddled me with a harness
soft of steam;

Rides through the riot of wind and sea where the
breakers roll abeam;

Spurs through the midnight's mystery while the stars
his sign-posts gleam.

The Liner

He has filled me with force, and the food that slays
famine in foreign lands.

He has set me my course that no storm delays. On
my ice bound bridge he stands.

Like a foam flecked horse my speed he sways; and his
soul my strength commands.

He has filled me with fever, filth, and crime that breed
my bowels within

As they breed in His till the destined time when the
judgments black begin;

And the germ of the stagnant steerage slime is the seed
of a nation's sin.

Laughter of children, lilt of song, and the prayer of
love I freight,

And the master builder's purpose strong, and failure
desolate;

And the pilgrim hopes and fears that throng through
the new world's water gate.

And they pass and scatter like the spray, and day by
day goes by.

And night by night I plow my way through a gulf of
starlit sky,

Where planets lone one law obey; the same as you
and I.

Paris, 10' 14 '08.

THE SANDS

ONCE we were not. Wind and sea round the lava
turned to stone
Made the sea cliffs. Somberly boulders ground to
pebbles shone.
Scaled and screened and sifted, we in our multitudes
were known.

Round the shores of all the earth in a long, unbroken
line
In a girdle gem besprent, gleaming in the sun we shine,
Smooth and hard and redolent of the fragrance of the
brine.

We make white her marriage bed where the passion
of the tides
Foaming mounts to meet the moon, over her remorse-
less rides,
Has its moment and departs; lies in wait, in shadow
hides.

We are earthworks. Where the rocks, castles breached
by waves, must fall;
We sustain their wildest shocks. Past our harbor
bars they crawl.
Sanctuary from the storm, refuge free we grant to all.

The Sands

We are snares, our shallows lie underneath the smiling sea;
Lure the sailors till the sky changes, blackens; hard alee,
Gleaming breakers surging high, shout our sirens' threnody.

We are scourges where the dunes rank by rank devouring go;
Shoreward march, and spoil the soil; lay your farms and houses low;
Till you plant the creeping things that slowly bind and break their blow.

So we symbol all the souls of the multitudes that lie
Near the last frontier of life and the strife of sea and sky.

Time his tides around them rolls, day and night that pass them by.

Small essential atoms all, daily stronger than before;
For the mighty are made small; ever farther spreads the shore.

Rocks and cliffs and mountains fall, and the sands are more and more.

These ye have to reckon with who are masters here to-day.

You must learn the primal law that both sands and souls obey;

Learn the meaning of their march, senseless, slow, and grim and gray.

That you lay your forests low, bare your lives to storm
and sand;
Slum and mill by millions know. Hardly shall you
understand
Channels choke, and shallows grow, and dunes arise,
and eat the land.

Paris, 11' 20 '08.

THE DERELICT

ONCE I rose in freedom where the sunrise crowns
the hills;
Where in serried columns, rippling seaward race the
rills;
Where the voice of ocean through the pine trees calls
and thrills.

Then they felled and branded me and flayed my
strength with steel;
Forged the rusting fetters that my festered flesh must
feel;
Fashioned bolt and plate and plank, and mast and
spar and keel.

I was thrust into the deep to float or founder there,
Outcast of the endless streets where stars from heaven
stare;
Every rock a stumbling block, and every shoal a
snare.

Men have had their will with me while heaven's stars
were white;
Raped and robbed me of my youth and beauty and
delight;
Fleeing from the wrath to come, have left me in the
night.

In the night I lie and lurk, derelict and black,
Till I drift into the liner's fog-beleaguered track
Till a thousand dive to death; and never one comes
back.

You shall build your lighthouses, chart and sound your
seas.

Still I spoil your argosies and bring you to your knees;
Still the ocean's waste infect with ruin and unease.

Wanton, wasted, water logged, waiting for the day
When the dark destroyer's shells shall shred my flesh
away;

When my bridegroom of the storm no longer shall
delay.

Sydney, 4' 5 '09.

III—WOMEN

MOTHERHOOD

NOW is it springtime in a fruitful land.
Heaven has drawn near to earth in April rain,
Out of their close embrace the growth of grain,
The flowers that on her face like flushes stand,
The bridal whiteness of the orchard trees,
The little leaves that whisper to the breeze,
The new-born baby buds that bless the sun,
The birds that sing of summer just begun,
Of homes and households that are yet to be;
Are all around me, all akin in me.

The south wind and the sunshine warm the blood,
The scent of growing grass is strong and sweet,
Through all the trees, all flowers that fleck my feet,
The sap streams upward in a rising flood;
The tide of spring that surges toward the sky,
The sharp sweet thrill that flutters, strives to fly,
That pulses fast, that beats beneath my heart
Trying to tear this cage of flesh apart;
Of me shall soon be born a wingèd thing,
A soul that seeks to soar; that dumb would sing.

To-day it sings in me beside the sea.
I am a mouth that utters nature's word;
The secret whisper in the midnight heard,
Longing for life and love and liberty.
I am fulfilled, my womanhood awake,
Waxing like waves that swell before they break,
Tossing aside their fading flowers of foam.
Life by my heart hid, must you haste from home?
Ah, but the flowers that fall beneath the frost!
Soul of my soul, we shall not all be lost.

S. S. Bremen, 7' 24 '05.

THE INCOMMENSURABLE

OUR life is the river of space.
And death is the brink of the falls
Where the star drift is foam on its face.
And time is a shadow that crawls.

And our love is our ultimate breath;
The throb of two hearts through the void;
The long sigh in the silence of death
Till the fetters of flesh are destroyed.

Can you measure the round of the sky?
Can you reckon the race of the sun?
Can you fathom the depth of the eye
That has mirrored creation in one?

Have you found her, the motive of life,
And the symphony's holiest theme?
The beloved, the mother, the wife;
And the real that remains from the dream?

Though the planets are parcelled and weighed
By your wit; and the walls of the heart
By your scalpel; though talons of trade
Tear the bowels of the mountains apart:

All your labors are houses of sand,
Such as children have built by the sea.
All our arts but as bubbles expand,
And have ceased while beginning to be.

All our works are as grains of the sand,
All our words as the gleam of the snow.
We who sorrow alone understand.
You must lose her, and find her, and know.

New York, 12' 2 '04.

THE ULTIMATE

BETTER you know yourself now, knowing her;
Feeling the brute from its lair in you stir,
Leap to its mate; and unleashed like its prey
Sated and senseless, lie sleeping till day.

Waking you looked at her, alien and strange,
Fetter of flesh for your soul that must range;
Shrank from her, hated her. Sudden she smiled.
She was an animal changed to a child.

Yes, she is animal yet most of all.
Nature that mothers and nurses us; small,
Shallow, inscrutable, furtive, and sly;
Instinct that lies while her eyes meet your eye.

There she lies nude in her litter of lace;
Childish and crude, and your freedom's disgrace.
With her you sounded the depths. Shall you rise?
She is a soul in her body's disguise.

Back to the primitive nature to-day
Strong in you summons you. Take her away.
Turn to the mountains. Earn slumber like lead;
Nerves that have tortured you dormant and dead.

Climb with her. Struggle o'er rock-leage and shelf.
Helping her grow with her stronger yourself.
Pause for the vistas, drink deep of the air.
Gather her flowers where each is a prayer.

Strive with her. Thrive with her, patient and wise,
Faithful, enduring, and fitter to rise.
You were her guide. Will you hinder or aid
Now that her soul has the summit assayed?

This is your ultimate; barriers and bars,
Rounds in its ladder like children and stars.

Paris, 12' 15 '09.

THE MOTHER

HER world within her arms she holds
Heart to her heart, the life to be;
From her own flesh an image moulds;
In infant eyes she seeks to see
The best of all that gave her birth,
Mirrors of heaven made on earth.

The mysteries of ages past
Have made her Sybil, prophetess.
She scans the future's purpose vast
In this her son. To-day's caress
While Cosmos halts to question here
Is Delphic portent—smile or tear.

Oh, Mother, may thine arms be strong!
Weigh love with justice. Even so
A little moment, not for long,
Thine is the balance, weal or woe.
And tremble not to take the scales;
For by thy faith he wins or fails.

New York, 3' 4 '02.

THE LIFE CLASS

PAST wasted color splashed on grimy walls
Like sunset hues, or fires that flare at dawn
Through life's gray monotone, the eye is drawn
To the white central shape that voiceless calls.

For here is Woman waiting pale and still,
Essential, silent, stripped of vanity,
Bare to the soul that has the eyes to see,
The strength and weakness that within her thrill.

Look well O artist. Balance light and shade,
Lend the bare breast a prophet's tenderness,
Till children nestle there. Express no less
The flesh superb that nature naked made,

Like some white pedestal that shall enthrone
A soul new risen to the lips and eyes.
Some street drab, drifted here, in dumb surmise
Seeing your likeness, may fulfill her own.

She stands the symbol of her sisters all;
Mother and wife and wanton, child and saint;
Into man's hands ordained to teach or taint,
Whether his art on earth be great or small.

The Life Class

Not all the honors that his peers confer;
Wisdom, achievement, riches, fame, command;
Shall test the soul that is to fall or stand;
As what he makes or fails to make of her.

Paris, 4' 28 '08.

THE CAT

A IN'T women cats? They 's kittens when they 's small.

That 's evolution. When they 's grown most all Are much the same. They call each other so. Sometimes the truth by instinct like they know. They yawn, and lick their fur, and trim their duds, And when you stroke them right they 're smooth as suds.

And when you stroke them wrong it ain't no joke. They 'd rather have that though than ne'er a stroke. They stretch and purr, and sidle round and creep Into your lap and cuddle, go to sleep, When you don't want them much. And when you do It takes a year to coax them back to you.

Lord, how they scratch. They 's the most cruel thing To mice and kids they hate. And when they sing— Me to the timber tall! That 's common ones.

The best, there 's nothing better all God's suns Have ever shone on or shall ever see;

One in a million—maybe two or three.

And how they hate each other, when the men Won't go round right. That 's nature's plan again. Give them a house and babies of their own, A master who will let them well alone,

The Cat

But not too long; they 're almost happy till
He has to scare them. Let them lap their fill
Till their fur shines and others envy them;
Give them a chance their sisters to condemn
For what they want themselves; they 'll love you so.
And in their heart of hearts this truth they know.
I 'm one myself. That 's why I 'm bound to say
We always have to give ourselves away.

Paris, 12' 2 '08.

THE MIRROR

THIS is the empty room where once she dwelt
Before she went away,
This is the glass that her soft breath has felt
Upon it day by day.

This is the frame that held her portrait dear,
Too perfect long to last.
So when I held her closest, warm and near
Into the void she passed.

There is an empty chamber in my heart,
Silent and clean and cold,
And there when twilight falls I walk apart
There for an hour grown old.

There is a mirror there, wherein she stands
A spirit pale and dim,
Lifting to me in silence tender hands
Held fast by seraphim.

Earth in its shifting orbit sees the sun
Fulfill the shades of night.
Another here shall do what she has done,
Let in new air and light.

The Mirror

Children shall come and stand where once she stood;
Where children long ago
When to our fathers life and love seemed good,
Learned wistful lips to know.

But in the land beyond the mirror's gates,
Beyond its bars of air,
There is a room wherein she smiles and waits
Forever first and fair.

Paris, 4' 14 '08.

DUST DEVILS (LES MONDAINES)

WE have no breath to say one word. We have no time. But still we must.

To-day our shallow souls are stirred though we are children of the dust.

To-day there came a circling gust of winds that sweep to wider things,

To higher, truer too we trust; and on its eddies we have wings.

And yet we know it cannot last. We have no hope to stir and save.

We have forgotten all the past, the sense of loss the parting gave.

We have no faith. We cannot see. There may be stars but we are blind.

We have no love. Eternity may warm our ashes unresigned.

But we are old and we are cold, unresting ghosts of days gone by;

Seraglio slaves our mothers sold for man's delight to dance and die.

Our sinful sisters walk the streets. We have no strength, no skill to sin.

In them the world's red life blood beats, and love redemption sore may win.

But we are passionless and pale or flushed with sunset's
fitful glow.

And in the night we fade and fail. The depths of life
we never know.

We see the children of our friends, we clasp them close.
They never smile.

They shun our kisses. So it ends, the flame that
flickered for a while.

For we are dead. And yet we bear contagion to the
world around;

The dust whose clouds obscure the air, that lies a
blight upon the ground,

That blinds the eyes, that color steals and light and
truth from living things,

That chokes the throat, that clogs the wheels, that far
and wide pollution flings.

For wheels must turn, and fires must burn, and dust
and ashes we are made,

And seeds of death, that men may learn in us them-
selves are most betrayed;

That love and sorrow, fire and tears might mould our
clay to life again,

Who line the highway of the years and for our waking
wait in vain.

And other women envied us. They taught their
daughters such as we

Are rich and rare and meritous. And as we were they
strove to be.

Forbear and spare. Our vanity is made the limbo of
our haste,

They will not hear. They cannot see the wind that
whirls along the waste.

And we must dance with it to-day. But if one other
wakes again

Who hears our prayer, and turns away; we have not
lived and died in vain.

Paris, 12' 5 '08.

THE HILLTOP

THERE is a hilltop where I go
When evening turns to afterglow,
And broken wracks and wrecks of day
Into the darkness drift away.
Salt blows the wind there from the sea
And on its breath she comes to me.

There is a hilltop of the morn
Where Bethlehem each day reborn
Thrones its Madonna. At her shrine
I offer gifts. And wings divine,
And winds of heaven worship there,
And kings and shepherds meet in prayer.

There is a hilltop of the night,
Where heaven's myriad trails of light
Exalt their vistas wide and far,
And lure the soul from star to star;
Where moonlit pools of silver sheen
Ripple and purge my passion clean.

There is a hilltop of the noon
Where life in flood is lapped in June,
Prone on the scented turf I lie
And count our castles in the sky
And watch the clouds slow blossoming
Unfolding all the years shall bring.

There is a hilltop of the heart
And while she dreams and prays apart;
Her eyes have caught the sunrise there,
And twilight tangled in her hair
Is waiting till I climb that hill,
And hearts throb loud, though lips are still.

Auckland, 3' 26 '09.

LOVE LETTERS OF A MOTHER, VII

TO-DAY my baby learned to walk alone.
Each little step he staggered from my arms
Into his future's fortunes, far, unknown,
Was dogged by furtive fears and faint alarms
That ghostlike trooped before him and behind;
That dimmed his smile with tears that left me blind.

I had so loved the life that all was mine,
That waked within me quickened like a flame;
That leapt to light through pain's red flare divine,
That round about my breast devouring came,
Drawing from me immortal life and heat:
Dear little lips with kisses piercing sweet.

Now is he weaned and walks, and all goes well.
Already begins his baby words.
His own life's story tries to all to tell
In accents sweeter than the song of birds.
And through my tears my heart his laughter hears
And treasures all against the tyrant years.

Life is too frail to turn its pages back.
So we must find them fairest once for all;
Snatch for to-day lest we to-morrow lack.
He must go forth to struggle, stand or fall.
Let me be nearest, dearest by thy side
Until the unveiled future brings its bride.

New York, 7' 12 '05.

IV—SCIENCE

WIRELESS

WE listen to new oracles across the darkest night,
Interpreting the void to those that may not
read aright.

We see the bottled lightning seethe in serried Leyden
jars;
The rapid fire that crashes, hear through strange sym-
phonic bars.

We know that other instruments are tuned to answer
ours;

Beyond the bounds of mortal sense a host of allied
powers

March on to beat the blackness back; and matter's
brutal odds

Thrill to the martial music of men and demigods.

Across the wrath of oceans, round the rocks that rend
and slay

The spars lift up their signals like hands upraised to
pray.

Unseen and unsolicited they make their message
known.

And men that seek an unknown God come closer to
their own.

The fleshless fingers beckon. They baffle fog and
 storm,
The letters of infinity's mute alphabet they form,
While voiceless angels silent throng, for mortal hearing
 seek
Of Him who to His blind gives sight and makes His
 dumb to speak.

Paris, 7' 18 '08.

THE X-RAYS

YOU love her better than your life,
And now the hour has come.
Her tender flesh shall feel the knife,
Your throttled heart be dumb.

You see the clotted seeds of death
Inside her, this alone.
The pulse grows faint. The vital breath
Eludes its cage of bone.

And that grim skeleton that all
Our strength and beauty bears
Essential looms. The flesh its thrall
Each second thinner wears.

Another surgeon's hand shall lay
The inner tissues bare.
With bleeding lips you strive to pray
Who say, "There is no prayer."

This you believe. We feel and see
(Ye blind that lead the blind)
Though life to-morrow may not be
When death leaves dust behind.

The X-Rays

New stars unborn you demonstrate
Beyond our range of sight.
New germs of life's last ultimate
Your lenses bring to light.

Your spirit sickens. Toil and hope
For science nears its goal.
The mind shall find its microscope,
New X-rays save the soul.

Paris, 12' 19 '09.

ANTITOXINE

THIS is the secret that nature concealed;
Who out of ether her elements wrought,
Out of them mind; till to-day has revealed
Part of the purpose of infinite thought.

Pharaohs and priests with their Pyramids passed,
Monarchs, inquisitors blind led the blind.
Man tore the scales from his eyes, and at last
Sees himself fit their resultant to find.

Under the test tube a colorless flame
Rises like science transforming the race.
Doubt and disease and decadence and shame
Fail, and for larger fruition make place.

Germ and bacillus are marshalled and scanned,
Microbes benign are enlisted to serve,
March and assault at the Master's command,
Fortify faltering sinew and nerve.

Death wavers back; and life's columns advance.
Powers of darkness from sick bed and slum,
Turn to retreat; and the world from its trance
Wakes and is strong. And each day adds its sum.

Antitoxine

Life's true elixir the chemist has found.
Lifting his test tube in silence he stands;
Knows that a Greater environs him round,
Life in solution upraised in His hands.

New York, 8' 7 '09.

RADIUM

LIFE on this planet is death and decay.
The desert grows greater, the air wastes away.
Laughter and love and their infinite cost
Dwindle and fail till the ultimate frost.

Life in each one of us runs to its end.
Age is a desert, the shadows descend.
Cold grow the heart and its hopes until death
Wipes from our lips the last measure of breath.

Farther the frost line shall creep from the poles,
Doubt and disaster shall deaden your souls.
Coal-fields are wasted. The lava is cold.
Gorged on earth's vitals the race has grown old.

Spirits decay, and our millions are more.
We have forgotten to pray and adore.
Honor is lost or is held at a price.
Virtue is vain and the victim of vice.

We are degenerate, false and unfit,
Millions that race to the verge of the pit;
Blinded, stampeded, to blackness we go,
Never an echo is heard from below.

Radium

Yet the unfit shall its fitness evolve.
Enters a factor our problems to solve.
Elements lapse; from their wreck is descried
Radium stronger than tempest and tide.

Out of the grave is salvation's rebirth;
Love that is vital, outliving the earth;
Light, heat and power that shall pierce through the
void;
Mind that shall mount, though the stars be destroyed.

Failures and falls are our ladder through space;
Death the dark handicap, life the long race.

Paris, 12' 20 '09.

THE LABORATORY

A BSCISSA and coördinate on paper ruled we plot
and chart;

The atom's soul substantiate; all life's partitions tear
apart.

We focus down our microscope—a hair's breadth the
horizon fills—

In fragile test tubes blindly grope for life that through
the ether thrills.

We build our castles in the sand against the rising of
the sea.

Our theories, our life works, stand one moment; then
they cease to be.

We set our marks and some remain, to show the limits
of its flow.

To-morrow shall some better brain the reasons for our
error know.

Some truths essential holding yet, the digits of the
problem vast,

The letters of life's alphabet, we stir one step beyond
the past.

The deeper sense of nature's word, the scope of quanti-
ties unknown,

Of formulas unseen, unheard; we miss, we may not
make our own.

But science long in patience toils, content to ponder,
sift and scan

The Laboratory

The power whose purpose nothing foils, the elemental
rise of man;
The growth of germs in chaos born that solar fires
unseared behold;
Unchilled shall death and darkness scorn, and inter-
planetary cold.

The great equation clearer frames; such modes of
matter treated thus

By older or by later names make the same minus still
or plus.

Such forms of forces focussed so the same resultant
always yield.

So tides must turn and rivers flow till the soul's secrets
stand revealed.

These are the rinsings of the glass, the droppings from
the slow retort.

So clouds condense and nations pass, the crystal
forms, our brains report.

Untrained assistants pencils seize, fallen and dull and
broken; so

They calculate infinities and add their cyphers to the
row.

The bubble breaks, the life is lost. O fool and slow
of heart and blind!

That life that all earth's aeons cost has gone its larger
life to find.

The rarer essence, redistilled, sublimed shall mount to
larger air,

The Master Chemist so has willed. His inner room
awaits us there.

Paris, 12' 29 '08.

THE OBSERVATORY

"**S**NOWFLAKES in the night, you think them,
poet?

Planets blossom nightly in your vision?
At your highest range you seem to see them
Serried hosts of heaven and signal beacons?
I have learned the stars, a lifetime, slowly;
Scanned them, weighed them, charted out their
courses;
Made my spectroscope a surgeon's scalpel,
Analyzed their thin red lines, their life blood;
Vivisected them, and learned their secrets.

"Man, I tell you, they 're eternal digits
On the great big blackboard of the midnight,
Where the Purpose of all evolution
Works His mighty problems out forever.
And the mind of man informs His fingers,
Mounts to meet His mind, and shares His life-work.

"Planets pass and agonize for ages,
Die, and are reborn again forever.
So the soul of man that is immortal
Suffers change, survives, and out of chaos
Learns the elemental law of living

Discipline through struggle.—And the midnight
Slowly grows more clear. Another factor
Simplifies; another vista opens.

Lad, to-night, I chart a moon of Neptune
Found by me an hour before you entered.
Very likely we shall read to-morrow
That some German saw it first. So be it.
Does it matter, so the star is charted?"

New York, 2' 12' 1910.

THE CONSULTING ROOM

THIS is our last confessional. The rest have we outgrown.

And here our brothers who have sinned to judgment go alone.

In shadow and in silence till someone coughs, they wait,

They turn the tattered pages and the pictures out of date

Of magazines scarce six months old, so fast we grow to-day.

Some see the whole world's records there. Some shiver, try to pray.

The black door opens. One appears, the judge of laws divine

You have transgressed. Your fellow sinners answer to his sign.

White cheeks grow whiter. So you wait. Your turn has come at last

And now the trembling present tries to answer for the past.

He puts his question with his lips. His wise eyes read you through

Before you speak. His strong hands hold a probe, and your heart too.

You see another rise in turn. You stiffen, try to smile.

A woman weeps in silence. You can pity her awhile.

A child sobs loud. You softly curse. You start.
 You hear a groan,
And panic comes. You pay your shot. You want
 to be alone.
You hail a cab, steal through your house; and now at
 last you face
Your private bar of judgment in the old familiar place.

Here is the study. Here the books you read, believed
 in youth,
When worlds were yours to win; and here her picture,
 God's best truth.
Alive or dead it matters not. You may not meet her
there.
Here you shall shrink, shall hate her. Could she for-
ever care?
Five years? Or ten at most? You hear your sen-
tence. Prisoned here
Scarce sixty days. In Arizona, possibly a year.

You're ordered south. Man can't you see! Whether
 you live or die
You go where He shall send you, who shall hold you,
 hand and eye.
No priest can damn your soul to-day. No doctor's
 word can kill.
You have your fraction's fighting chance; indomitable
 will.
If you can capture life again, think you His purpose
 fails
Who tests you, rests you, tests you, till your soul
 grown strong prevails?

Paris, 12' 12 '08.

THE UPLIFT

YES the world is worse and better both, to-day
than long ago.

Species vary. Vice and virtue more evolved and fitter
grow

For the one primordial purpose. Some revert to type,
but all

Are not wasted, unconsidered, howsoever slight and
small.

Long ago men told the story of the lost Atlantis land
Sunk in wrath for sin transcendent, since they could
not understand

That the purpose is not human, that its will is not as
ours.

Sin and death like pain and slumber are its strong
subservient powers.

Long ago the lava mountains started from the ocean's
plain,

Some to stand in island summits, some to sink from
sight again.

Aeons passed. And coral polyps died and with their
bones prepared

Foothold for new generations that their labor blindly
shared.

Ages passed. They ringed the mountain till the atoll raised its reef.

Sand was powdered. Birds brought seeds. From rotting mosses frond and leaf

Sprang to life. The palm trees' rustle down the tradewind's courses ran

Waiting, calling, night and morning till a home was made for man.

Law unchanging sank an island, raised another instantly.

Earthquake travail tore the planet; land was lifted from the sea.

Polyps toiled, and life subaqueous hurled through chaos blindly eyed

Light and sky it was not made for, saw its God's new face and died.

Ages passed. To-day we suffer, strive, and die in unsucces;

Not the tenth submerged alone, but all whose flame of life grows less.

Nations pass and form a foothold for the race, and life shall grow

Slowly, surely, up to heaven though the mountains be brought low.

Nearer light we form this nation. Variation has attained

Newer types and larger, freer; corals bloodshot branched and brained.

Comes or stays the storm, the earthquake; rending,
slaying, surely we
Serve the race that rises slowly like the coral from the
sea.

Island life is still before us. Wider vistas wait our
eyes.

Mountain-tops of light whose beacons star the oceans
of the skies.

Paris, 12' 3 '08.

THE FRONTIERSMEN

YOU say the days of pioneers are past, the last frontier is lost, is wiped away;
That earth is fettered fast in steel at last; life grows more tame and cruel every day;
That Drake and Raleigh's work on earth is done, that Boone and Crockett's like no more we breed;
To younger planets nearer to the sun they have gone on on trails untrod to bleed.

It may be so with them. It is not so with us their father's sons who usher in
The noonday of the race. The fairest hours for fighting men and pioneers begin.

Earth grows more crowded daily. Greater odds are ours to count, to weigh, to charge, to rout,
To blaze our trails through. In our cities' slums our pathfinders through savagery shall scout,
We felled the forest once and laid it low. We swept its lurking perils from our path.

We loosed the floods. To-day till trees shall grow we must rear up new walls against their wrath.
We must drive back the desert, stem the seas. Our engineers go pioneering still.

Our surgeons war with danger and disease. They reinforce the long beleaguered will.

Life has come near its limits on one plane. But life
that never pauses learns to rise.

Skyscraper floors our footing find again. Our air-
ships seek the frontiers of the skies.

We must dig deeper. In our darkest mines, in depths
below the tenth submerged we hear

Rumors of fire damp. In these close confines is born
the master courage kin to fear.

We run and leap. The records still go down. We
train; the body's limits still extend.

We make machines more subtle, swift, and strong;
our powers are multiplied without an end.

We roll up riches till our money kings are stronger
than the emperors of old;

Nor lands nor seas their frontiers, stronger things, the
whole world's hunger and its lust for gold.

Earth 's our arena. So our bodies strive. Fit to sur-
vive our stronger sons are born,

And fairer daughters. Love is still alive. His lists
are wide; his barriers night and morn.

The mind's dominions widen. Furthest stars are
scanned and weighed. Our eyes adventure there.

The chemist's skill unlocks the atom's bars. The
lonely scouts of science sweep the air.

They go beyond. They tread the trails of space.
They war with germs without us and within.

They shall dissect the nerve, the brain, the soul. They
prove disease and madness one with sin.

They hypnotize the dull subconscious will, extend its
borders, and record its laws.

So shall the master healers of mankind awake the
world that slumbers to the cause

The Frontiersmen

We all must fight for; scout and pioneer, painter clear-eyed, and singer sounding true.

Teacher and preacher; till the last frontier our spirits near, and heaven is ours to view.

Paris, 12' 10 '09.

THE CHAIR

YOU shall no longer stand among your fellow men.
And all your hands from life have wrung lies
shrunken then
To that lone place beside its board, the seat of horror
where
The headman is your host and lord. They strap you
to the chair,
From shrinking flesh the wrappings roll, the cold
electrodes lay,
Like serpents' coils that crush your soul. You seem
to swoon away.—
This is our Moloch's altar grim, since blood for blood
still cries,
And since your eyes untaught were dim you are our
sacrifice,
Our hostage that we dare to rack, our scapegoat cast
Into the pit whence none comes back. Night's wilder-
ness at last
Shall be more kind to you than us, who slowly day by
day
In slums and sweatshops murderous that profits pay,
Your like by thousands doom to death. No shape of
terror sits
To still the shudders of your breath and soothe the
soul that flits.
Death the old mother in her arms shall clasp you till
Your spirit rests from life's alarms and slumbers still.

Paris, 11' 11 '08.

V—THE CITY

MIDNIGHT—THE WAITING-ROOM—JERSEY CITY

THIS is the vestibule. A continent
 Opens outside these westward swinging doors.
Ever the sound of footsteps on the floors
Quickens and swells. Anon the wave is spent.

Rank after rank arisen over seas
Along the foreshore black of night they break.
Rank after rank of soldiers half awake
They march to make to-morrow's destinies.

Some halt. Some pace like restless sentinels.
And through the stormy clangor of the trains
A mother lulls her babe in tender strains.
And unawares the whole world's secret tells.

New York, 7' 11 '03.

THE SKYSCRAPERS

WHEN earth outgrew her limits she made a
mountain range.

She drew her lines of cleavage. She suffered stress
and change.

She raised her floods of lava high until the snow-peaks
rose

To flash the signals of the sky; its dawns and after-
glows.

We have no eyes to see them, who crowd the market
place.

But the same long cosmic pressure is strong to mould
the race.

And every wave and every train that rolls o'er land
and sea

Evokes a folk migration to a land of liberty.

There was neither space nor grace for them in the
cities old of men,

Their lords devoured their substance. They took the
trail again.

And while they come to swell the crowd that struggles
here to rise

Above their Babel hoarse and loud these towers assail
the skies.

They are the spars we raise to-day of mighty scaffolding.

They are the piers unfinished of to-morrow that shall bring

Order at last from chaos; out of the struggle blind
A vision of the purpose that our building has designed.

They have grown with the rising of the race, like the growth of trees and grain,

That stakes its claim in the heart of space. Sorrow and toil and pain,

Its aspirations high and prayers, have raised them here to be

The foot rules of its will that dares to scale infinity.

Here where the faults are focussed the lava surges through.

Out of the soul's corruption the spirit builds anew

Beneath the lifted ladders where the workmen slowly climb,

The broad and strong foundations of a city more sublime.

New York, 9' 10 '09.

THE HIGHWAY

LIFE is motion, never ending pilgrimage through
paths of space.

Here the feet of men forgotten trod the trail that leads
the race

Past these lights to make the stars its milestones
towards its dwelling-place.

All the shadows of the city wake to watch the arc lights
blaze

Where Broadway is made a mirror of a myriad Milky
Ways.

Here the heart of all the heavens beats on earth while
dawn delays.

Here a nebula is lucent. Millions of its atoms swarm
Where the nodule of a nation finds its evanescent
form.

Here the soul that is eternal lights a fire its flesh to
warm.

Endless atoms in their orbits, endless germs of life, and
light

Swirl and form a flaming vortex where each arc light's
beams are bright.

Endless eyes that wake to watch them out of inter-
stellar night,

The Highway

Gaze unseeing; on unending errands through creation go.

Men that chart the curves of ions, life's electrons learn to know,

Blind their brothers in the blackness where they hurtle to and fro.

Life is light that flames, and falling flows through space in fiery waves.

Stars shine here that died when first the Pharaohs piled their granite graves.

Here the life of ancient Egypt makes to-day its lords and slaves.

Life is rhythm, the measured marching of the armies of the dead

Down the trail that all must follow through the darkness far ahead.

Here they made it hard, enduring, underneath the ages' tread.

Here the crowding millions marching, countermarching faster past

Camps and cities, plant their torches on a frontier dark and vast;

Build Life's road, make straight His way, until His triumph comes at last.

New York, 7' 09.

HERALD SQUARE

YOU who have felt the pressure and made good,
Who cold and hungry heard the presses thunder;
And watched with eyes that little understood,
Sheet after sheet show white, and double under;
And saw beside you there some face of wood,
Some well-clad idler's stare of vacant wonder;

Clubman, collegian, child or priest or maid:
Have you not envied them their careless faces,
Their lives untried, untainted, unafraid;
Their linen white? These are the printless spaces,
The margins for your mark. His ink may fade,
God's sheet moves on. You would not change your
places.

New York, 6' 8 '06.

THE FACTORY WHISTLES

THE night is rent by sudden hoarse alarms.

The dawn has barely tinged the winter skies
Where trails of smoke from grimy chimneys rise
When labor's bugles call a world to arms.

Through squalid streets the army takes its way,
Childhood and age are sad together there,
No thrill of hope the stolid faces wear,
As bleak before them breaks the barren day.

They wage a hopeless war without redress.
Their leaders false, they fight not for their own.
Delight and hours of ease they have not known.
Still to the strife their columns onward press.

New York, 5' 16 '99.

THE ARENA

THEY have raised the seats of the mighty around
the City Hall

Where Nero sits in office and taxes great and small.
And the nation's vast arena around the place is ranged,
For we are the heirs of the Romans. In little are we
changed.

Bread and the circus crying, the multitudes begin
To fill these tiers at daybreak. And still for those
that win

We shout and we shoulder nearer, and still turn down
our thumbs

And doom to death the vanquished. And the sound
of our shouting comes

From the curb where we crowd the closest to the last
skyscraper's floor,

And the millionaires' high altar of the wealth we all
adore.

Day after day when sunset has glorified the west
We go our ways unseeing, and we win us little rest.
With the lusts of place and mastery and money still
we strive:

These are the beasts we battle with to save our souls
alive.

Year after year the springtime awakens earth from sleep:

And the world grows warm with summer while our hard won hoards we keep.

And our hearts grow hard and colder. And the flowers and the children's smiles,

And the dreams that we dreamed in boyhood grow dim. And the weary miles

Of life's hard highway lengthen. No other goal we know

But the gate of the great arena, and the seat in the highest row.

Yet are there visions that gleam awhile down the vistas gray of years,

Strains of some vagrant music that summon unshed tears,

Faces seen on a ferry like the loves that might not be,
Wind through the office window with its word of the open sea.

We who must die salute Thee, Lord of the lives of all.

We are Thy gladiators, Thy purpose holds in thrall.

Nearer we march each morning from our prison to the night

When we hear the end of the shouting and we sink in the last grim fight.

And the moon looks down at midnight on a crater bare and cold;

Hard as our hearts that have builded it, and as sad and stern and old.

Paris, 11' 11 '08.

THE CRUCIBLE

HERE by the borders of the sea and land,
The fingers of an everlasting hand
Have traced these streets like furrows in the sand.

The heat and burden of the day are done.
Out of the west the embers of the sun
Are raked; unchecked the streams of pleasure run.

A crucible of molten life is spilled
Upon the pavement; every mould is filled,
And souls inert to sudden heat are thrilled.

The arc lights glimmer in a flaming line,
At playhouse portals lurid letters shine,
And jewels gleam like bubbles born of wine,

These are but sparks that fleck the surface. Slow,
Deep in the shadows, in the slag below,
Hardens and cools the crust of want and woe.

Doubt and distress and poverty and pain,
Fear and despair and shame that sears the brain,
All fused to fever heat, grow cold again.

In the cool silence of His hours of sleep
He shapes our prayers, the trysts that lovers keep,
Triumphs and trials, and tears that women weep.

The Crucible

Tempered in sorrow, tested not for long,
Under the sledges of His shapes of wrong;
In night's black smithy shall His steel grow strong.

This day a million mortals marred, shall He
Fashion His fragment of eternity
Into the pattern of the days to be.

New York, 9' 14 '07.

THE SWITCH YARD

OUT of the glimmer of arc lights and spaces of shade,
Far on the frontier the city has won from the dark,
Rails in the moonlight in ribbons of silver are laid,
Eyes that are watchful the loom of the switch yard
 shall mark,
Ears that are keen to its music shall hark.

Red, green and gold are the signals that mark the design.

Black is the ground where the work of the weaver is spread.

Bright in the night is the glittering length of the line,
Swiftly and smoothly and strongly the shuttles are sped

Bringing and braiding and breaking the thread.

Clicking of switches and resonant rolling of wheels
Mix in the midnight with stifled escape of the steam.
Down the long siding a shadowed shape silently steals,
Sudden it checks; and the gride of the brakes is a scream,

The sound of a rent in the stuff of the dream.

The Switch Yard

Stars in their courses in switch yards of uttermost
space,
Thrills in the ether that galaxies, systems, obey
Meshes immortal of motion and matter to trace;
Feel as they reel and they race down Heaven's per-
manent way
Past the tall signal tower holding the void in survey.

New York, 2' 10 '04.

THE MORAINE

LOOK down love from the Bridge's height
And see the buildings piled below,
A heap of pebbles in the night
Where stars like fireflies come and go.

Here by the border of the sea
Where life has left its last moraine,
The soul of man eternally
Resigns its pleasure and its pain.

The glacier glides into the deep,
An endless river of the years,
From the far mountains where they sleep
Who first begot our hopes and fears.

Cave-man, Crusader, scientist,
They pass as pass the centuries;
And teach these stones to still persist
To tally time's infinities.

What does it all mean? Aeons dear
Have left Manhattan here to-day
That we might meet. Our home is here
To share with others while we may.

New York, 8' 29 '09.

THE CLOCK IN THE AIR

HIGH on Manhattan's tallest tower
The clock keeps watch and tells the hour.
The chimes ring out their reveille.
The city wakes, and turns to see
Its campanile's shaft of white
Against the sunrise. All the night
It points its finger at the sky.

All day the multitudes march by;
While like a skylark's song there falls
To waken souls in prison walls
To thoughts of meadows far away
From dusty rooms that hide the day;
Of snowpeaks and the open sea;
Of all the city's symphony
This note supernal and supreme
Teaching the toilers how to dream.

New York, 8' 25 '09.

VI—THE INNER LIFE

THE CITY OF DREAMS

IN the distant lands of dreaming
Stands a city on a hillside
High upborne by cloudy bulwarks,
All by endless light illumined.
Happy are its hopeless people
For their fears are all forgotten.
There they know nor noon nor daybreak,
Sun nor shadow, care nor joy.
Every night I climb that mountain,
Seek and struggle unavailing,
Scale the steep, assail the hillside,
Baffled, blinded, faint and fail.
Every hour there flit before me
Visions of unearthly beauty,
Gentle glances, smiles undying,
Tears that time has kissed away.
Sometimes standing in the gateway,
Halting on the very threshold,
Held enthralled by strains celestial,
I have seemed to see her face;
Dreamed I kissed her garment's hem,
Deemed she drifted ever nearer;
Then the gates have crashed together
On a waking world of pain.

New York, 4' 21 '03.

THE DREAM

LET us forget the mountain peaks to-day,
The fields of freedom where the children play,
The fragrance of the garden dim with dawn,
The years of youth that down to dust have gone;
Here in the noonday's burden and its heat,
The glare, the roar, the riot of the street;
Cloudlike the dream shall come, and in its shade
Sad lips shall smile, faint hearts grow unafraid,
Dull eyes shall brighten. There shall we forget
Failures and frauds and custom's ceaseless threat,
The barren triumphs and the tainted gold,
Safety and honor crumbling in our hold.
We will remember loveliness and peace,
Beauty and joy that were not born to cease,
Kisses of children pure as crystal springs,
Voice of the spirit where a skylark sings,
Sunset and snow, and forest, field and sea;
Watchfires of stars that guard eternity;
Heaven here on earth, ours in one woman's eyes.
While these endure the dream that never dies
Under our ashes stirs and flames anew.
All these, our allies, ranged in long review
While with the crowd we struggled, passed unseen.
We have been blind, nor is our honor clean;

The Dream

101

We have known weakness, shame, unfaith and sin.
Much have we wasted. Had we wiser been
We should have less to win still; less to share.
Beyond the dream our own are waiting there.

Sydney, 2' 28 '09.

THE IDOL

THOUGH you find her feet but clay,
Though they trample on your heart,
Kiss nor spurn them yet, but pray
They may learn to play their part,
Strive to find for them the way.

Take your idol, raise her high.
Blend her with your best ideal,
Let her forehead feel the sky
Though the rest of her be real.
Kneel and toil and testify.

*This is she that might have been,
Such am I and by her grace,
Scourged by failure, folly, sin ;
In the promise of her face
Sure that better years begin.*

Guard her as your polestar there,
Sweet and true and half a child,
Unfulfilled, forever fair,
Till your pain is reconciled
With the strength that marks despair.

Hold her high and climb to her,
Till your worship wins its own;
Though no pulse of passion stir,
Tears and kisses too, unknown;
Till her eyes your crown confer.

S. S. Medic, I' 20 '09.

FREEDOM

MEN are born free and equal? These are lies,
We were born slaves to free ourselves and rise.
Slaves to the passions of ten thousand years,
The lusts that died; the bitter, barren tears.
We were born warriors. In each human skin
Battle the germs of sickness, shame and sin,
Of death and life; of error and of truth,
And none shall hold his citadel of youth,
Inviolate at all hours day and night.
The foe shall enter and the soul shall fight—
Surprised, outnumbered, beaten to the ground,
By its best friends betrayed; and blinded, bound,
Bleeding and dying: or resurgent, strong,
Indomitable, grim, besieged by wrong,
Hungered, athirst, unsleeping and alone;
Relieved at last by forces not its own.
Freedom is warfare. There your brother stands,
Smiles till he takes his life with his own hands,
You were too blind, too shrewd, too weak; afraid,
His soul's frontiers to force, invade and aid—
The arch-foe's stolen city to retake.
Freedom is wisdom loved for wisdom's sake.
Efficiency, the science hardly won,
By struggling ages, work well planned, well done,

Freedom is love that keeps its altar clean,
City and home and nation; fire unseen
Or flaming beacon, for one purpose trained.
Freedom is service; strongest when constrained.
Ranged with its ranks alone your souls shall be
Heirs of the freedom of the hills and sea.

Paris, 12' 21 '08.

THE COUNTERSIGN

THERE is one talent it is death to hide,
God's self can pardon not, the suicide
Of flesh and soul that thwarts His Holy Ghost.
Self-sentenced dies the sentry at his post
Who sleeps and sinks beside the dark frontier
Of truth and error. Midnight's mists of fear
Assail thy spirit. Hardly shalt thou pace
The weary rounds of loneliness, and face
The shapes that stalk thee. Pluck thy burning brand
From truth's camp-fire. The brute that cannot stand
Slinks back and bides his time. And so must thou.

But if in man's own shape it fronts thee; now
Summon thy strength's reserves, thy challenge cry,
"Stand thou and speak, or one of us shall die."
Hast thou well loved her, has the crisis come?
Her soul and thine shall die if both be dumb.
Is thy friend strong and blind? Then thou must pray,
Wrestle and win, or trampled into clay
Give up thy breath in honor. Even so
Jacob with angels strove; and from the glow
Of Nero's gardens, martyr torches flamed
To light our way. God's purpose is not shamed,
Thwarted nor darkened by our sins to-day.

We all, our nation's destinies may sway.
We who have grace to lead our fellow-men,
Guard or destroy; the gift of tongue or pen,
Power or wealth, or science; insight, art;
Panders or prophets, all must stand apart:
Out of our hour of darkness call, or fall,
Are you for truth or treason to us all?

Paris, 11' 21 '08.

THE REAL THING

YES, you 're down, you 're dazed, you 're sore.
But you 'll get up again.

Take the count and watch his arm if you 've got head
enough.

If the girl 's gone and she never will come back, alive,
There 're as good as she on earth still. On my word
there are.

If it 's money, you 'll make more. The world is full
of it,

Full of people simply waiting to give up to you.

If it 's drink, there 's time to sidestep till the final
round,

If you 're sick and sad, the better times are bound to
come.

If you 're hungry, there are others that are hungrier,
If you 've lost a friend forever you 'll get next to him
Just by making other friends like him and keeping
them,

If it 's death itself you 're facing, so 's the world as well.
If he can't be countered longer, every one of us
Soon or late must go against the big black heavy-
weight.

He 's your sparring partner merely. If he knocks
you out

It 's because your trainer simply thinks you need a rest.

So it 's up to you to show him you 're no quitter yet.
Other rings in heaven or hell there are you 're scheduled for

Where you 've got to go against the real thing, some-time, soon or late.

Men like you have landed knockouts in defeat's own face.

Get one blow in first. Last one round more, for God's sake, man.

Paris, 12' 21 '08.

IGDRASIL

“EXISTENCE is a tree,” the Norsemen said.
 Silent it grows through all eternity,
Each branch a nation, every leaf a life.
Death is the wind that comes and shakes the leaves.
We know not whence it comes nor where it goes,
Nor what it is, nor why at times it breathes
So soft the withered leaves alone must fall;
Nor why, again, its blasts shake all the tree,
And boughs are reft away, and leaves still green
Are whirled through farthest space. Nor can we tell
How buds this life of ours, and how it fades,
What is the nourishment its roots receive,
And what the blasting sources of decay.
We only know we are, and then are not;
While, soft or fierce, forever blows the wind;
And silent grows the tree, eternally.

Hartford, 10' 3 '93.

LOVE LETTERS OF AN EVOLUTIONIST XI

LOVE, let me hold you close while light is ours.
Not in the night's mad rapture are we near.
Siegfried the strong in song has made it clear
A sword most sharp divides the marriage bed.
We may not forge in passion's furnace red
Bonds that shall hold while cold the spirit cowers.

Within the mirrors twin your eyes uplift
I see my own true image near and plain.
At noon's high tide a moment we remain,
Then shadows lengthen into weary years.
Flesh knit to flesh with kisses and with tears
Death shall divide, and time make wide the rift.

How shall we hold together, heart of gold?
Death is a sword of steel most bitter keen.
How shall we fare through farthest stars unseen
Beyond the black abyss of space to meet?
Love, shall the lips whose touch is piercing sweet
Whisper one word when life in us lies cold?

Shall instinct blind that brings the birds again
Back from the winter to last summer's nest
Be strong to bid our love survive the test?
Have we not lost the scent of forest things?
Hath hope unbent the spirit's slackened wings?
Shall faith in longing spent forget forever pain?

How shall we know that all is not a lie?
More dear than life itself I hold you, dear.
Here in this word is heard a word of cheer,
Since at your feet my life I'd gladly lay
God must be good to give and take away,
And pay again the price beyond the sky.

New York, 8' 14 '04.

THE PORTRAIT

To paint a portrait of her that would live
Longer than Raphael's fairest Mother of God,
This is the task that I have set myself.
And I shall fail. For I should have to blend
All of the flowers that make this old world fair,
All of the dawns and sunsets of the ages,
To fix the changing color of her face.
And I should want the wind that sways the grain
To show the way she comes to welcome me;
And all the lights and shadows of the ocean
In storm and sunshine, to suggest her eyes.
As for the soul that wakes and slumbers there,
That wavers round her lips like living music,
Near and elusive, I should have to borrow
The dreams of poets, and the hearts of heroes,
That leap to war with wrong instinctively;
All of the joys and sorrows of the city
Wherein she lives and learns and lifts a torch
To honor and her pilgrims. I should need
The tenderness of lovers and of mothers,
The insight half divine that heals the sick,
Redeems the fallen, makes the feeble strong,
And every one more glad, that looks on her,
Night's mystery and noon's unsullied light,
To make her real to eyes that may not see.

The Portrait

She is more true and vital than myself,
And though no canvas ever can contain her
In every man's hard heart she lives immortal,
Ideal, like Galatea masked in stone;
Till time the sculptor sets her free forever.

New York, 10' 14 '09.

DREAM CHILDREN

BY winter firesides have they most been missing,
O maiden mother with the withered breast?
Neath summer starlight have you felt their kissing
Soft in the shadow by the breeze caressed?
Then have they grown to crown each gracious shoulder,
Wings of the spirit that a seraph seems,
Arms of the mother love that grows not older,
Strength of the weak that bears the babes of dreams?

Have you been wise, to see the sordid city
Cruel and vast and sick with suffering;
Out of the ardent passion of your pity
Learning the light to languid eyes to bring?
Have you been strong to cast your arms around them,
Harlot and thief and widow sore bereft;
Making each child your own where'er you found them,
Stilling the throb of pain while life was left?

Sister of sin and shame and all who sorrow,
Prophet and priest and fighting man forspent;
We who must toil to-day to build to-morrow
Out of the ruins of our discontent;
We who must strive to stir the love whose leaven
Quickens alone the life naught else redeems;
This is our surest proof and pledge of heaven,
Children whose smiles we only see in dreams.

Paris, 4' 22 '08.

VII—THE WEST

THE GUN

I AM the Anglo-Saxon's second tongue.

I was the ultimate word of your nation young,
When Standish marched and his cannon stood
On the meeting-house roof to rake the wood,
And the Ironside grandsires slew, their prayers among.

I was the frontier's call and countersign,
When the pioneers deployed their fighting line,
And the forest fell before their stern assault;
And the Union rose and marched nor stayed to halt,
And life was brave and free, and death divine.

I was the soul that woke at Lexington,
That spoke at Yorktown till the work was done,
That echoed back the roar of Waterloo,
That Wellington's most seasoned soldiers slew
And saw the Mississippi crimson run.

I was the voice that swelled at Sumter's fall
Northward and Eastward, Westward, rousing all;
Until a million men in battle stood;
And Freedom's charter by their blood made good,
Struck off the shackles from the alien thrall.

I was the herald of the Golden West.
I woke the voiceless echoes, fired the quest.
I spoke for Sitting Bull, Geronimo.
From lava beds to peaks of crimsoned snow
I wrote the Red Man's last red fighting test.

I am the court supreme of last appeal,
When bombshells burst o'er frontiers carved with
steel,
Whether from Prussia, Africa, Japan;
If ye shall breed no more your fighting man,
Chastened and suppliant, sentenced ye shall kneel.

Honolulu, 4' 27 '09.

THE FLOODS

A GES on countless ages the forest slowly grew,
And we came in clouds from the ocean, and
the raindrops filtered through
The living screen of the branches as they sifted light
and shade.
And the winds of heaven whispered through the twi-
light we had made.

And the deer through the glades went gliding below;
and high above
The birds in their nesting echoed the Indian's songs
of love,
And we ran in a limpid river and we spread in the
placid lake,
Where canoes that steal like shadows scarcely a ripple
make.

And you came and you brought your discords to the
forest's symphony.
And we heard the sound of the axes and the crash of
the falling tree,
And the strident gride of the saw-mill, and the rail-
road's whistle shrill,
And the roar of the burning forest where once the
world was still.

Since you have spoiled our handiwork and idle strength
set free,
And the waters rise in the springtime as the sap swells
in the tree;
You shall fly from our futile fury and our havoc wide
repair.
We are the strength of the nation's youth your haste
has wasted there.

In the noonday's heat and burden the earth is rent
and scarred,
Gutted and gashed with gullies like the lives your
hands have marred.
And the sandy barrens widen. In a world devoid of
shade
Fire and famine follow us through the desert you have
made.

You have taken peace from the people; beauty and
joy and ease.
You have built them huts of timber where once were
growing trees.
Though we turn ten thousand spindles where the
river dwindle lean,
Can we weave a cloak for your nakedness like the
forest's robe of green?

Vainly you darken your city's streets, and steel on
stone-work pile,
While you bare the flanks of the mountains and our
sources pure defile.
You have wounded the world and wasted it. And
your sons shall bear the scars,

The Floods

And shall starve where the arclights glitter and their
dazzle hides the stars.

You must sow the seeds of the spirit. You must
plant the trees again
For the sake of your children's children and the
pleasant sound of rain.

Paris, 11' 12 '08.

GRAIN

LIGHT was reft from darkness, land and sea
appeared.

One unchanging purpose wide the field surveyed.
Strange chaotic forms of life lusted, slew and feared,
Hungered, died and fertilized the soil that love had
made.

Glaciers plowed the prairies, rivers rose and ran.
Earth was robed in verdure. Slowly grew the grain
Toward to-day's perfection. And so the mind of
man

Learned to plow and sow and reap and garner home
again.

Here the soil primeval lay till yesterday,
Virgin, fair, and spared a new-born nation's need to
feed,

Here the happy hunting grounds where men might
love and slay

Nursed the childhood of the race nor knew the taint
of greed.

Flowers filled the plains with light. Dusky bison
hordes

On their last migration passed. Red men, pioneers
Into silence followed them. And so this earth affords
Food for famished millions and a storehouse for the
years:

Counters for your corners, money for your lust,
Rations for the regiments of tyranny and pain.
Fertile, fair and undefiled for righteous and unjust
Grows the nation's sacrament of sunshine turned to
grain.

Reapers shear the Golden Fleece. Threshers winnow
fine.
Mills shall grind it into dust, and men the seed shall
sow.
Death and resurrection and service, all divine,
From its daily bread of toil the world shall grow to
know.

Leagues of flame aspiring, waves of living light,
Sway across the plains. The winds like seraphs stoop
again,
Hold their breath adoring before the wondrous sight,
Heaven's golden floor on earth, a glory wrought of
grain.

Paris, 11' 19 '09.

THE CANYON

GOD opened here His folded book
That men might read. He scored each wall
Where snows of myriad winters fall
And wasting, waste the stubborn rock
Whose beetling fringes overlook
The sullen torrent's surge and shock.

Each noon He bids His sun bow down
To utter deeps where far below
The fallen waters restless flow.
Each night His stars are mirrored there.
And where His crags unbending frown
He sets His flowers to make them fair.

Royal Gorge, 1' 16 '04.

THE SNOW PEAKS

THE hills are bowed about their feet,
The plains lie prone and far below.
They lift their hands their Lord to greet
In sacerdotal robes of snow.

Shades unassailed their matins throng
When sunrise lights its candles high,
And cloudy incense trails along
The eastern altar of the sky.

The roll of thunder's organ tone
Their silences of noon has stirred.
To their enduring hearts of stone
The storm winds preach a holy word.

Strict vigil through the dark they keep.
Through night's tall temple windows they
While all the world is wrapped in sleep
The stars of heaven behold and pray.

New York, 7' 2 '99.

THE ROOSEVELT DAM

WE set our symbol at our valley's gates
Where the floods rushed together. Strong it
stands

To bar their way. The alien from all lands
Shall come to marvel where this bulwark waits:

Shall see the silent majesty of law,
The bridge that binds the high heroic past
To that more lofty future, that at last
Shall test our building, every fault and flaw.

Already in its shadow slowly rise
Waters once wasted that at last shall flow
To bring the mountains near and melting snow
To desert ranches drear and rainless skies.

And you whose purpose would the clouds compel,
For whom all rivers run, all oceans bear
More to your mountain; master-millionaire
Shall you not learn to serve and so do well?

Paris, 11' 12 '08.

THE STAMPS

THE crash of our anvil chorus reechoes day by day,
And the rocks go down before us and the mountains melt away.
We are keeping time, we are marking step till the army onward tramps.
And the sway and the surge of labor's hosts is the war-song of the stamps.

They have prisoned powers of thunder to swing our hammer heads;
And the earth for an anvil under have set, and the watersheds
Where the rocks are piled, and the foot-hills heaped,
and the ranges upward roll
In stark Titanic stonework of the watch towers of the soul.

And our iron roll unending rings long across the night.
With a roar and a sound of rending we drum you to the fight,
And the new recruits in double shifts come hurrying to our call
To the fort of life beleaguered by the shades that wait for all.

And we fall and flail the strong and true from the dross
that drifts away.

This is the task we share with you to shake the soul
from clay.

And our ammunition trains roll out. And the cities'
scattered camps

Are reinforced, and each weak redoubt, by the powder
from the stamps.

Paris, 11' 16 '08.

THE DESERT

HERE long ago beneath a leaden sky
Titans and devils strove in leaguer vast.
On mesas lone their scarped entrenchments lie
In broken ranks that witness to the past.
And the low foot-hills rise in shallow waves
To make a multitude of giants' graves.

Here heaven's siege guns thunder sullen still.
The baffled lightnings stab the barren sand.
Here lurks the rattlesnake and strikes to kill,
The cactus sentinels an arid land.
Like tears that women shed in pain in vain,
There falls the broken promise of the rain.

And here twin threads of steel have traced the trail
That man must follow on to victory.
Here must he toil however nature fail;
The mountains' secret water springs set free,
Till children smile where'er a garden grows
To see the desert blossom like the rose.

New York, 10' 30 '03.

THE FLUME

THEY killed five hundred years of life,
Butchered the red wood into planks.
And higher still they raised their knife
And scarred the mountain's hoary flanks,
Smothered a waterfall in gloom,
And stilled its music in the flume.

And still the water limpid flows
Unresting, rapid all the way;
And brings the chill of melted snows
To cool the plains that parch to-day;
And from the hillside's citadel
Sends succor to a city's hell.

And light flames forth where light was not.
And power transmitted, life transfused
In surgeon's cauteries is hot.
And nature's vital force is used
To sear and scar and sterilize
The sickness that unsuccored dies.

The water murmurs through the flume
Since we have stabbed the mountain's veins
And made our mother's strength assume
The burden of our sins and pains.
But the great Surgeon surely knows
Why love that falls unfailing flows.

Paris, 11' 19 '08.

THE REDMAN

OUT of the dark and bloody soil
That colored red his human clay,
Out of Kentucky's wild turmoil
He learned to trail and slay.

We felled the forest o'er his head,
We spoiled his hunting, stole his home,
O'er prairies bare, untenanted
We drove him forth to roam.

He is our brother Ishmael.
As Israel dealt with Hagar's son,
Outcast, at war with all to dwell,
So have our soldiers done.

Out of the mountain's last retreat
Where rattlesnakes on lava lurk,
Out of the desert's hoarded heat
Where gold calls man to work;

We forced him fighting to the last.
We ringed him round from sea to sea,
A smear of red upon our past,
To-day, and time to be.

For the same harsh environment
That made him subtle, restless, grim,
Unsparing to the innocent,
Has fashioned us like him.

So we have lost our last frontier,
Our epic red from coast to coast.
And merciless, who know no fear,
The victors suffer most.

Paris, 12' 28 '08.

VIII—POLEMICS

THE EXPATRIATES

YOU call us all expatriates because we stay away,
And are n't convinced that work per se's more
sane always than play.
You get the habit, use your minds for muscles, motors,
scales,
To weigh the money value of to-day that stands or
fails.
Earth shuts you up in motor cells of its big brain of
steel.
Here we 've perspective, atmosphere. We find the
time to feel,
To criticise, interpret art's historic loveliness,
We all are heirs to. Are you sure we love our country
less?
Not more? We 're frank to-day; we are deserters
from the cause
Of truth and freedom there at home; enforcement of
just laws,
Impartial, wise, efficient; like you whose breathless
haste
Has glutted you with power you waste like wealth
your women waste.
Barbarians all, like dynamos, like soulless summer
flies.

They come abroad and shame us in the whole of Europe's eyes.
Your work at home defrauds our sons, together with your own,
And men shall rise against you. And when that hour is known
And earth's last revolution breaks the trusts your lusts abuse
We will come home and fight you or with you as you choose.
We hate your noise, your blatant boasts, your swagger, glitter, greed.
Your yellow journal's creed we read: "At any cost succeed."
We love our country most because we see her faults and yours,
And underneath the purpose strong that freedom still insures;
That crowds earth's bargain counters and the sales you advertise,
Drummers of loud prosperity and watered stock and lies.
America 's not there nor here, it 's everywhere to-day,
It wakes the world, its last frontier finds savagery at bay,
In darkest Russia, Africa, Manhattan darker yet,
Where fouler tyranny than Rome's you tax or else forget.
America 's a state of mind, a mission of the soul.
Show us the way to win it. We 'll race you to our goal.

Paris, 12' 3 '08.

MONEY

WHAT will you do with it? What will it do,
What has it done, is it doing with you?
Nations have fought and died; sages have thought,
Heaped up your heritage. Ages have wrought
Strength for your children, their duty and dower,
Wealth, obligation and peril and power.
Waste it, you waste yourselves; hoard it, you shrink
Will muscles dwindle, and minds fail to think.
Let it alone. It mounts up like a flood,
Filth from your tenements; God's flesh and blood
Racked in your railroad wrecks, maimed in your
mills.
You are inertia that crushes and kills,
Moves through its weight; is blind. More you are
mind.
Either to stifle man's spirit resigned
Or its sworn champion. Dwindle or grow.
This is your talent who no others know.
Give it away and your hands are not clean,
More than were Pilate's. You serve the machine,
You who should rule it. You shall not be safe.
Duty means danger. Your spirit shall chafe,
Grapple the levers (as eyes grasp the goal),
Ride on past wrecks to the heights of the soul.

Perilous, strait, is the path past the pit.
This is environment. Are you unfit?
Freedom means service. You hold in your hands
Blood of the martyrs, your nation that stands,
Rises or falls; all the essence of time,
Millions of lives that shall wallow or climb.
Fail, the world fails with you. Cheat at its game,
Those you love best bear their share of the shame.

Paris, 2' 8 '08.

THE BALLOT

WHAT do you make of it? What will you do
with it?

How do you think that you well will get through with
it?

Here is the problem life puts in your hands.
What do you know of each name as it stands?

Common report or a newspaper's praises,

Paid for and false, or a lie that amazes,

Damning your friend, or else nothing at all?

Here is our formula. All great and small

Freely shall vote without favor or fear

Govern themselves. Do you find it so here?

Here are the candidates, A, B, and C,

Quantities known, and unknown, Y and Z.

What do you know of them? What will you do with
them?

Spending each year, scarce one minute or two with
them?

Many spend less. Are they fools more than you?

Truth shall examine you claiming its due.

Ignorant, blundering, reckless, for sale

Here you walk up to your life's task and fail.

What do you think of them, daughters and wives?

Are these men fit for the race that survives?

Who in one million of you does her share
Having money and brains and full leisure to spare?
All of us slaves to a single machine
Mammon's and Moloch's, to aims crude and mean,
Breathless and blindly we blunder each day.
Schoolboys for folly are scourged. So we pay.
We are in haste and our sons shall pay more.
Shall they, or shall we yet even the score?
Or must we wait till these boys in our schools
Find us out cowards and spendthrifts and fools?

Paris, 12' 7 '08.

THE SANCTUM

Is this cell a sanctum? Surely if the devils keep
Inner shrines in Hell obscurely. Here we never
sleep.

For a single soul's damnation all the world we scan,
Throwing mud at all creation, mocking God and man.

Here we hastened for our schooling when our youth
was white,

Here our evil angels ruling tripped us into night,
Here the chains of custom hold us, women that we
wed.

Children's little arms enfold us, lest they lack for
bread.

Therefore we retail our treason, tell the people lies,
Print each foul and perjured reason, point each vile
surmise;

Do the bidding of our masters who their profit take
From humanity's disasters and its felons make.

Here these narrow walls bear witness to a nation's
shame,

To a century's unfitness. Here the robbers came,

Here they plotted, here they bartered, here they
bribed and bought;
Sick and starving millions martyred, strangled love
and thought.

Woman's secret shame revealing, we do murder here.
Manhood's honor tricking, stealing; fraud and hate
and fear,
Servants blind of evolution, wired to this chair
For a soul's electrocution; find their mouthpiece there.

Here for virtue's vivisection stands this desk, a rack,
Until lust and greed's infection, isolated, black;
Yields to truth that strikes unswerving though our
lesser lives
Pass, their tortured purpose serving. So the race
survives.

New York, 10' 18 '09.

THE ARMOR BEARERS

LORD of the levelled lightnings, of battle's thunder
cloud;
Thou that dost shake the hearts of men and make
and break the proud,
Granting each race and nation grace, each in its space
allowed:

War in the East is rising. War in the West is rife,
And the nations gird their armor on to grapple for the
life,
Nor shall we stand aloof for long in a world o'er-
whelmed with strife.

Yellow or brown, or black or white, one race shall
lead the van.
And the old gods wake. And the false gods quake.
Buddha, Mohammed, Pan,
Come side by side to conquer Christ in the last
crusades of man.

And the restless city sends us forth to sentinel the
seas;
And the iron lusts that spur the North, through peril
and unease,
Shepherds of fleets and ocean lanes and lives and
liberties.

Harlot and thief and money king; their burdens all we bear.

Pander and felon, faithless wife, the price we pay they share,

They that dare take their profit from a starving child's despair.

Therefore we war with sea and storm that we may war with men,

Because the blind must lead the blind, the brute be mastered when

Thy vials of wrath are emptied out and judgment comes again.

We are thine armor bearers, Lord of all power and might,

Guarding thine arms till thou shalt leave thy last frontier of light

And turn to earth to summon us to Armageddon's fight.

Then if our quarrel be unjust when we put out to sea,
Scapegoats the mob before them thrust their shield defaced to be,

Our navies are as drifting dust, and crimsoned clay are we.

San Francisco, 5' 11 '09.

SWEAT SHOP CHILDREN

THESE are the little ones of three or four
Whose infant fingers never learned to play
Who sit and pluck the basting threads all day;
Frail strands of life that ravel grimed and gray,
That fret and fray and fall along the floor,
In filth and shadow lost are seen no more.

These are the eyes that never learn to smile,
That see such sunlight as the diver sees,
Strained through the nether seas where never breeze
Shall stir the stagnant depths. Of such are these
Who eye their one dim window blindly while
As blind their mothers stare, imbruted, vile.

These are the ears that hear no sound of mirth
Through the black winter's bleak and bitter cold;
Through the gray days when fog wreathes, fold on fold
Strangle the acrid air; when women hold
The babes unblessed that die before their birth,
In August's Tophet; these defile the earth.

These are the tongues that never learn to tell
Whisper of love or word of faith or cheer,
Stories of stars and saints and all things dear,
How shall they sing whose only faith is fear?
How shall they love who all in darkness dwell?
How shall they hope whose only home is hell?

These are the seeds that bear their bitter fruit
Of pestilence that slays both flesh and soul;
God's bowstring mutes that bear His fatal scroll.
Mutely they answer death's unending roll,
Pander and felon, thief and prostitute.
Sharing their sentence we shall stand as mute.

Paris, 12' 1 '08.

THE CHILD

YOU who are breathless through your busy day,
Stay. Have you ever wandered from the way
To where the houses stoop and sag and crowd,
Debased and vile? There women cry aloud
And no man listens. Have you climbed within
Up the steep stairs of pain and shame and sin,
And sought to find inside some shadowed room
A sick child sleeping in the stagnant gloom,
Whose pallid face and sunken dismal eyes
Still might grow fair and mirror God's own skies?

Say have you paused to watch your fellow's face
Near, in the street here, manhood's black disgrace;
Lips like a sword gash, hard, unsmiling, strong
In all the iron lusts of greed and wrong;
Lost to delight and numb to tenderness.
Dumbly their shame, their failure they confess,
Like the cold eyes. The drawn and frowning brows
Under their pent two lurking captives house.
Restless, insatiate, the millionaire
Paces his cell, serves his life sentence there.

Could you but bring the child that slumbers there
Out of the spirit's slums to larger air
Into God's sunshine, let His winds of grace
Lighten the lines and shadows of the face,

Waken the soul that sinks, and yet recalls
Visions of sunlit seas and garden walls,
Echoes of careless song and love and mirth;
You would build heaven's kingdom here on earth.
"You must be born again," the Scripture saith,
Many, so many, only after death.

New York, 9' 18 '07.

THE VICTORS

WE have fought and we have made the pace and risen from the ruck.

We have got our grip on piracy and learned to discount luck.

And the little men kow-tow to us. The big ones stand aside.

In hundred horse-power racing cars straight to our mark we ride.

And we break the last speed limit. And we hog the whole highway

For the earth to-day belongs to those who have the power to pay.

We have dammed the whole world's money lust, its hunger and its cold.

With our irrigation rentals legislatures bought and sold,

Fix our tariffs and our subsidies. Immunity we buy.
And justice is our serving wench. Her lovers steal and lie.

They are wedded to our wages. They are panders to our will.

We make machines that mangle men and maim and crush and kill.

And women starve and walk the streets, and gutter
children curse

In the sweatshops, on the sidewalks, that defile the
universe.

And we have to bear the brunt of it. The muck-rake
handlers tell

How the masters of the millions try to raise the rents
of hell.

And the press that can't be subsidized its searchlight
arrows sends

Till they nail us to the target of a life that 's lost its
friends.

It 's a life that loses interest when you weary of the
game,

And you see that all creation will be running just the
same

When you have to leave the levers, and there 's no one
left to care;

And the flowers are still in blossom on the ramparts
of the air,

Where the stars stake out their heavens to the souls
that stayed in touch;

And the whole that you 've accomplished does n't
seem to come to much.

Yet the world is made for money, and for record stakes
we played.

If the game has gone against us we will quit it
unafraid,

For there can't be worse before us than the sense of
all that 's dead

With our broken dreams of boyhood, in the blackness
there ahead.
And our work shall stand to witness in a world of
fighting men
Till the Master of to-morrow whispers, "Son, begin
again."

New York, 10' 11 '09.

FLOTSAM

PARKS may be the city's breathing places,
If they are, they breed tuberculosis,
Little ones like this where most you find us.
Hoboes, beggars, race-course touts, repeaters,
Poolroom sharps, bums, failures, thieves and panders.
There 's the city lodging-house, its vermin
Bred and fed by us for generations.
There are free lunch counters and the bread line.
There are easy marks with dimes and nickels.
Beer is cheap, the papers are still cheaper—
And cigar butts can be had for nothing.
There are women fools enough to trust us,
Prostitutes and our own wives and daughters,
When you 're up against it hard, the wood-yard.
When the weather 's cold you break a window,
One on Broadway filled with phoney diamonds,
Go to jail and let the city keep you,
Laugh at starving fools that think they 're honest.
Nothing matters much unless you 're thirsty
Or a copper beats you up for nothing,
Just one finger of the hand that scratches
When we bite too hard. You 're just as lousy
As we are ourselves. Your lungs are putrid
With us and our like and we infect you.

So we go along with you to judgment.
Hell, you 've got to die as well as we have.
Then, what good will all your money do you?
If we had one chance you had a thousand.
God himself can't say that we have made you,
And the devil knows you 'll stand for us then.

New York, 10' 14 '09.

YOU

YOU of the higher selfishness whose god is self
sublimed,

Whose cult is culture carved or sung, or written,
painted, rhymed,

Who hug your little hoard along the ledge where you
have climbed;

And dream you near the mountain-top, and dread to
look below

From misty seats Olympian and life's grim battle
know,

And men like you that starve and slay, whose blood
and tears must flow.

You feed to surfeiting with lies, you raise the false
ideal

Of sterile ease immaculate, that others dimly feel
Since you are far, aloof, unknown; is fair and high and
real.

You blindly die. Unfit to strive, the beauty of the
strong,

The soul that keeps its light alive through warfare
long with wrong

That soiled and scarred shall still survive, a living
marching song,

Is not for you; ye faithless Scribes and Pharisees to-day

Who anise, mint and cummin weigh, and tithes of trifles pay;

Who wrest the spirit of the law and love's great soul betray;

Whose single talent vellum wrapped, in gloss and comment hid,

Must moulder more than multiply until the world is rid

Of moral loss and leprosy; till men your like forbid.

You are the palace eunuchs of the world's seraglio dark.

You are the spirit's panders. Your gifts like jewels mark

A soul's seduction from the light of truth. And still we hark

To prophets false, to priests that preach the symbol for the deed.

Whose empty chalice gem-adorned you hold to hands that bleed.

For you have spilled the wine of life and crucified its creed.

And still the people suffer you, pain brings forgetfulness,

And strife and grief each day grow great; and loyal love grows less;

Deserters from the cause of God whose name your lips confess;

Clergy, professors, critics, all who share the cynic's view,

Children who dream till scales shall fall and judgment day be due.

Ye know not what ye do. For all is pardon, so for you.

Paris, 11' 27 '08.

IX—VARIA

THE PHONOGRAPH

I AM the voice of your race and hour, strident,
mechanical, harsh.
And my megaphone with its brazen flower like a lily
in the marsh
In the stagnant souls and minds of men quickens a
vague perfume
Till the past grows near and clear again through the
grayness and the gloom.
And the seeds of thought and of feeling hid in the
blackness of the clay
My silent record's dust amid, I harrow forth to-day.
And they bloom in the faces wan and worn and they
brighten weary eyes,
And faith and hope and love reborn make a moment's
Paradise.
Where the blubber melts and the ceiling drips in the
Eskimo's hut of snow,
In the foc'sles dim of deep-sea ships; where the trades
through palm trees blow,
Under the blaze of the tropic stars, on the islands of
the mist,
Where the mining camp the mountain scars, my
monotones persist.

In the forest dark, in the darker den whence the savage raids the slum,
I charm the hearts of brutes and men, I waken voices dumb.
More than the printed book I say; more than the written word,
Or the preacher's art, I seize and sway. Wherever my voice is heard
And the people gather by twos and threes, red men and black and white,
I open larger liberties of vision and delight.
I am the voice of your race and hour, the sound of your vast machine,
And a gospel new of truth and power, a word from the world unseen.
Strident, mechanical, harsh am I, to your breathless measures set,
But I tell of a land beyond the sky, of a life ye shall not forget.

S. S. Medic, 2' 16 '09.

THE SONG OF THE WIRES

BIRTH of the world and the wrestle of elements,
 sudden division of darkness from light,
Such were the powers whose strength had begotten us,
 e'er we were prisoned in aeons of night.
Then came the miners, they found and they fashioned
 us, stretched us afar over earth and below.
Some in the sunshine are harpstrings, Aeolian, reso-
 nant, struck by the winds when they blow;
Some in the shadow taught tenderer harmonies,
 laughter of lovers bring lip unto lip;
Mother's devotion and children's endearments and
 tidings of cheer from the tempest-tossed ship,
Whirl round the world. And we whisper the infamies
 men and our masters constrain us to tell,
Their slanders and rumors and treasons and per-
 juries. Secrets eternal of science we spell.
Lifework of prophets and priests and philosophers,
 vision of poets and raptures of saints,
Notes that arise from the stress of our symphony,
 cries of the flesh and the spirit that faints.

And the roar of the market-place swells and shall
 storm, overwhelming the day,
And your homes and your hearts shall invade and
 possess, and the night shall not drive it away.

And its echoes shall trouble your slumbers while you
start at our summoning bells;
To the hills and the seas shall pursue you with a spell
that allures and compels.
And the forests shall yield you no refuge. You shall
raze them and set them ablaze.
You shall prospect for gold in the desert with the thirst
that first maddens, then slays.
You shall toil and shall widen the city till its ulcer
of steel and of stone
Eats the flesh from God's earth and its beauty. You
flay the world bare to the bone.
You shall strive and your hearts shall be hardened and
shortened your sight and your breath,
You shall stifle your souls and shall rest not till you
lie in the silence of death.

This is the truth that we tell in a tongue inarticulate,
mute,

This is our warning and prayer in the path of your
breathless pursuit.

Voices that wrangled in chaos, through silence of
centuries taught

Service and order and law and the ultimate triumph
of thought,

Freed by your hands to enlighten your spirits, and
rendered again

Slaves to your weakness to-day that to-morrow in
strength shall remain,

Powers that throb in your pulses and order the drift
of the sun,

Weighing and strictly recording the good and the ill
ye have done,

Messengers dumb and divine, and your kinsmen, we
counsel you still;
Watching your steps for a sign of the way of the
infinite Will.

Paris, 11' 7 '08.

THE SONG OF THE TYPEWRITER

I 'M the god from the machine of modern trade,
And my oracle 's a rattle and a jerk.

Flying fingers quiver quick
While I race the ticker's click.
So I hold a world of weariness to work.

I 'm a bundle keen of slender twitching nerves,
And the keyboard where the market prices play.
And the note that I give forth,
Restless children of the North,
You can hear it in your voices more each day.

When the long dull winter afternoon drags slow,
And each file you lift seems weighted down with lead,
And the dollar signs grow dim
And the rows of figures swim,
You can hear my hammers pounding in your head.

They will play you up success that cannot last,
They will tell you tales of failure's crushing blow,
But however fares the quest
They will give you little rest
Till the end when there is nothing much to show.

Better rest a bit and turn your weary eyes
To the girl who lays her fingers on my keys,
Just to catch her weary smile;
And to dream a little while
In the long forgotten kingdom of heart's ease.

I 'm the god from the machine that holds you fast.
And my sibyl slurs her copy when she can.
Though her beauty is n't much
It shall add the saving touch
To an iron world made merchandise by man.

New York, 6' 4 '03.

THE TUNNEL

THEY have taken the strongest and slightest of things, they have imprisoned the powers of the air. They have narrowed the sweep of the whirlwind's wings to a half-inch width; and there Each ghostly hafted hammer rings with the rhythm of an iron prayer.

And labor's endless litanies in this crypt that is carved in night,
Sound while the woods and the waters freeze and the ground grows hard and white;
While the spring awakes and the summer breeze, and the world is bathed in light.

And the rock that grew hard at the lava's height in a crater cold gives way.
And the drills march on, and the dynamite its siege guns brings to play.
And the powers of darkness turn to flight; and the workers win toward day.

Somewhere beyond on the other side of the mountain men are toiling,
Mining the winter's citadel and its storms and rigors foiling;
Marking humanity's advance by a cable's ceaseless coiling.

Slowly they move to the tunnel's end and the last
pale arclights glimmer,
Where the burnt out carbons strew the way, with
faces gray and grimmer
As the screen of stone between grows thin, and the
flames of life burn dimmer:

Till the echoing hammers answer fast; and their toil
in the tunnel ended,
And the last black barrier rent and passed, and the
wall by death defended;
Their own shall lead them out at last into sunlight
new and splendid.

Paris, 11' 12 '08.

THE COTTON MILL

THE children in the tropics ran
Naked and warm and free and fair.
We preached till trade in prints began.
We brought our gin and Bibles there
And found new ways to fetter man.

We dammed the rivers, rapids taught
To ply the spindle, wheel and loom,
And children from the steerage caught
And prisoned them in noise and gloom
And long and blindly greed has wrought:

A spider in a cranny gray
That sits and spins his strands of steel,
That sucks the children's lives away,
Their thirst and hunger cannot feel
Or hear the words they cannot say.

Outside the world is warm and bright,
Within they languish pale and thin,
And dust and lint and plague and blight
Their shrunken chests are breathing in.
They buried four last night.

And yet they smile in childish glee
As dancing motes, when through the clouds
The sunshine breaks, and strive to see;
And patient sit and spin their shrouds,
And wonder wistfully.

They cough and choke and strangle there,
And greed the spider old and gray
From each frail life exacts his share.
We women who his prices pay
His leper's livery wear.

Paris, 10 '3 '06.

THE SUPREME COURT

THIS is our National Academy
Of human rights, the sanctuary of freedom.
Here there is silence. While the Senate chaffers
And the House raves, and all the world outside
Batters its breaches in the walls of peace,
These old men sit deliberate and wise,
And weigh their evidence. So shall you see
A laboratory's balance room, the scales
Where twenty letters on a sheet of paper
Shall outweigh ten. They place their test tubes there,
Write down the ultimate analysis
Of equity, until the formula
Of justice stands assured, irrevocable.
This is the higher criticism of truth,
In flesh and blood beyond all written records.
And here the hand of God as truly writes
As when the lightnings shook the mountain top
And Moses bore the tables of the law
From trembling Sinai. Not in storm or earthquake,
The shoutings of the street, the roar of war
And revolutions, does He speak to-day,
But in the still small voice that here ordains
Cities of refuge for the souls of men
Whereof this is the chief. So long as we

Shall guard this inner shrine inviolate,
Passion and avarice, unrest and treason,
Shall be no more than fevers in the body
While the brain rules, and will indomitable
Holds fast our Anglo-Saxon heritage
Of freedom and fair play to least and greatest.

New York, 10' 30 '09.

THE REGIMENT

THE traffic clears, and the crowd to the curb shifts
to the roll of drums,
As down the dusty avenue the long brown column
comes.
And their faces match their khaki. From Luzon's
tropic suns
They took this tan, and the glint of their eyes like
the glitter of their guns
Flamed on the way to Pekin till they saw the flag still
there.
They bear their faded colors past, and something in
the air
Lessens the roar of the city! One gray bystander sees
The Stars and Stripes at Gettysburg and faces set like
these
When death broke battle's mould. They pass,
indomitable, strong,
Wearing the deathless order of discipline. The throng
Gentile and Jew and Kelt and Hun and their own
blood brothers thrill
To the ripple of their cadenced ranks; for now the
drums are still
And the measured tread of feet that marched to set
the Cubans free,
Falls on the asphalt like the sound of breakers when
the sea

Strikes on the sands at midnight to mark the pulse
of time.

And the nation's heart-beat blends with them; the
boys that breathless climb

To a lamp-post or a column's height, the girls whose
ardent eyes

Wake to a world of fighting men and the dream that
never dies,

Embattled, grim, in touch with them; crude as brown
powder grains

That leap to life and shake the air when freedom fires
her trains.

Essential, hard, dynamic, fit and silent still they go,
Down the pathway of their duty to a goal that none
may know.

Here is the nation's last reserve, these and their next
of kin

When the ends of earth are looted bare and the years
of wrath begin.

For each heart guards its citadel and these shall serve
alone

When millions fail and navies sink and forts are
overthrown.

They pass and the city's tumult throbs through its
arteries

And fills them full of greed and lust, dishonor and
disease,

And dreams insane of peace unearned, decadence and
disgrace.

But still the red blood corpuscles shall vitalize the race.

New York, 10' 23 '09.

THE BALLET

L ISTEN, the flutes of fairyland are sounding far away.

And the curtain climbs, and the footlights flame like the dawn of a summer day

And out of the shadows steal the sprites to whirl like the winds at play.

You that are free from the bonds of flesh shall see them dancing there

Through the lights, and the shadows' shifting mesh, immortal, fresh and fair

Like the living notes of a song that floats forever in the air.

Look where one comes to the sound of drums and oboes as she trips

Touching the hidden hands of life with lifted finger tips,

With the smiling pride of the première exultant on her lips.

She is incarnate joy and youth, beauty whose soul is grace

Like the flowers that sway in the breeze of May. And the spring has flushed her face.

And the heart of the old world warms to her for an hour and a breathing space.

And the sombre soul of the city wakes to a season of
delight

And its plaudits fall as its pulses stir like the roses red
and white

She crushes to her bosom there to bear into the night.

There there is sorrow and despair and the weight of
lonely years,

She goes to join her sisters there in an ocean salt with
tears

And the curtain falls. Like a breaking wave her
triumph disappears.

Day after day from the depths of life, from the ends
of the earth they rise

Wave after wave with its froth and foam and its
impulse towards the skies.

Night after night they cast their spray and they die
as daylight dies.

And the line of the ballet surging high like the comb-
er's curving crest,

Feels the pulse of life as it swells and falls by a pur-
pose strong possessed,

As passion on through Cosmos crawls to a harbor
sure of rest.

New York, 9' 21 '09.

THE SYMPHONY

THE great proscenium arch gapes wide, the gates
of darkness fall.

A single cornet's note has cried its challenge clear to
all.

Each crowded tier at either side thrills through the
darkened hall.

We look into another world; God's stage with music
set,

We watch the leader's baton swing, and cares and
fears forget,

Our breath and pulses keep his time, and weary eyes
grow wet.

We hear the rustle of the leaves, like winds that wake
at dawn.

To whisper peace to sleepless ears. On faces white
and drawn

The dew of heaven's kisses lies. The hour of rest is
gone.

Swift as the rush of sunrise as the rays that blazon day
The full crescendo sings and soars. A skylark melts
away

In music in the blue above. The shades no more
delay.

The Symphony

They fade; all silence ceases as noon comes surging high.

An arm that drags the zenith down is raised to reach the sky,

To lift a thousand dormant souls from depths where spirits die.

He grips us, gains us, holds us; for his moment rare, supreme.

The master's soul reborn in him has realized its dream. And heaven on high and earth below one world, one second seem.

A string has snapped, the tension breaks, the symphony is flawed,

A woman laughs. Another yawns. The brute but half o'erawed

Stirs restlessly. Men plan again, the tools of greed and fraud.

For sunset always follows noon. The powers of darkness rise

To meet a meteor chord that falls in splendor from the skies;

The leader's pride like Lucifer's grows less before our eyes.

We were too weary to applaud. And night's forgetfulness

Fell like a curtain on our pain. To-day through storm and stress

The echoes rise, insistent, strong, to stir and save and bless.

For we are weak, unresting, blind. She is not here to
see,

To say our triumphs have not failed, our hour is yet
to be,

Our losses are our instruments in heaven's symphony

Paris, 12' 26 '08.

THE CAMERA

SINCE you have not eyes to see
Since you have not faith to find
Vision, vistas, liberty;
I was made to aid the blind.

I am beauty's dwarf and slave,
Cramped and colorless and cold.
Black my art is. From the grave
I can charm your hours of old.

When the summer suns have set,
Winter's twilight stark and white
I invade lest you forget
All the loveliness of light.

Where the slum, a shadow black
Bars your trail to things above,
I adventure, bringing back
Children's laughter, youth and love.

Prisoned beauty's slave I speed;
Painter, poet, errant knight;
Cry for succor till you heed,
Then she blesses you with light.

Paris, 11' 19 '08.

X—VERITIES

PIONEERS

THEY have blazed the way with bloodshed
where their fires of torture burned,
Signals black of smoke that showed where danger lay.
And the young men turned to seek them. And their
strong hearts westward yearned
And went camping with the sun from day to day.

And they followed running water and took counsel
with the breeze
And the stars they closely questioned when they
could.
And their sign-posts were the mosses and the slanting
trunks of trees
In the darkness and the dangers of the wood.

Close behind them came their women. They were
splendid, brave and strong;
Fresh and fair as forest children that they bore.
They were freedom's primal pilgrims. Love and war
their marching song
Through the shadowed silence echoed more and more.

Through the forest's dim cathedrals, through the
windows autumn stained,
As they went their eyes were wise the truth to see.
From the foes that lay in ambush where the red man's
arrows rained,
From the wilderness of death their souls went free.

In the distance they are calling through the ghosts of
fallen trees
Where the city's voice makes deaf our modern ears.
We have dulled our eyes with ledgers, loosed the
sinews of our knees,
Shortened breath and stride, who once were pioneers.

But the impulse and the measure of their marching
stirs us still,
And the instinct of the race that shall not fail;
While we bring the big battalions of to-day to work
their will
And we follow where they scouted down the trail.

Paris, 5' 11 '09.

THE TALENT

SO when this man was on his sick-bed laid
And tasted death his heart grew sore afraid,
“O God, if there be any God,” he prayed.

“Because Thy law was hard I lived in fear.
Wrapped in its napkin see Thy talent here,
Shrouded and saved for Thee this many a year.”

And Life, his lord, made answer: “Thou hast failed
Miser of years and seconds death assailed.
Nor has thy cowardice at all availed.

“Life is thy talent, thine to use or lose,
Hoarded it wastes like withered heart and thews,
Life is a game where all must stake and choose.

“Life is a battle where no mortal may
Stand and look on, where all one law obey,
And none dare shrink and shameless steal away.

“Who wrestles not with life and fells his foes,
Holds fast his wife and children; never knows
Warrior’s and lover’s triumphs, trials and woes;

“Who sleepless serves not science, toils nor prays
Through art’s long ritual of laborious days,
To raise his God made flesh that lives always;

"Who in love's sacraments has never shared;
Feasted his friends, nor for the dying cared;
Nor his own sleep to save the starving spared;

"He has not lived. In him the vital flame
Reverting trembles backward whence it came,
And he shall die, as dies unheard his name."

Then said life's traitor, "Lord what shall I do?"
Answered his Master, "Sleep, then strive anew."
And round his eyes the veil of darkness drew.

S. S. Navua, 3' 21 '09.

THE VISION

DEAD walls have made your spirits dead, and
dust has dulled your eyes.

You see a single step ahead. You haggle and devise.
You crowd one corner of the earth to count and hoard
your gold,

Misers of love and smiles and mirth, whose souls for
shams are sold.

The dawn is robed in splendor. You will not wake
to see.

From twilight's promise tender you hurry breathlessly
Into the blaze of restless nights that counterfeit the
day.

The stars hang out their signal lights. Your thoughts
are far away.

Your brothers toil in darkness long. Their children
starve and die.

Out of their sickness you grow strong. You steal
from them the sky.

You cheat the blind. The weak you maim. You
grudge them light and air.

You take your tithes of women's shame that makes
your daughters fair.

Your whole horizon slowly shrinks as your hard hearts
shrink

While you relinquish wholly freedom to feel and think.

The Vision

You are but babes within the womb of the travail
of to-day

Till angels from your living tomb shall roll the rock
away.

Sorrow maybe or a baby's smile; and your soul is born
anew.

And you raise your eyes in wonder while the sunrise
turns to blue.

And you see the sky in a tuft of flowers, in a gutter
urchin's eyes,

And the rain comes rippling down in showers on the
streams of Paradise.

And you see the streets of the city, and the blind and
breathless throng.

And a part of an infinite pity has made your purpose
strong;

From all that chokes and thwarts and kills, the
prisoners to set free

On the holy places of the hills and the highways of the
sea.

Beauty that is your heritage belongs to you once
more,

And the child's true heart that cannot age, that smiling
shall adore;

The loveliness that will redeem the lives you learn to
share.

You have awakened to the dream and the Vision that
is prayer.

Bath Beach, 9' 8 '09.

THE MACHINE

WHEN Joseph ruled in Egypt he was master of
our craft,
And Pharaoh's prison taught him how the wheels
were greased with graft;
And he taxed the people shrewdly, and he made his
little deal
With the priest's machine that hated him since less
was left to steal.

When Caesar wrote his Gallic War, the senate fixed
the slate,
And they shipped him to the Philippines to sidetrack
him, too late.
And he went and made his own machine of iron
fighting men
And the legions smashed the primaries, and he was
boss again.

This is creation's story from the first primeval years
When the cave-men shamans got their grip on king
and people's fears
And they worked the spirits overtime, till some one
guessed the game
And made them stand in with him. And it's always
been the same.

People are sheep. We've Scripture's word for it,
and so they know
But very little more about the way they ought to go.

The Machine

You fleece them close; their wool grows fast. And if
you did n't—why

Worse wolves than we are waiting, and they 'd simply
stray and die.

You 've got to keep them in the rut. You crowd them
on the train,

You 've got to have conductors and brakemen and
the brain

That built and fired the engine; and that fires the
driver too

When he gets to think he knows it all, and has no use
for you.

We had to live like other men, and so we took our
share.

Maybe it was a bit too large. So now we pay our
fare.

We keep the traffic moving though. One thing we
know. The way

To make men value anything like freedom. Make
them pay.

If they won't give time or blood, then cash. We can't
and won't step down,

And let reformers wreck the train, so long as any
town

They can't make good in for two years. But when
they 've learned the game,

And win promotion to our place, we 'll be more glad
than tame.

Paris, 11' 18 '08.

THE PRAETORIANS

CARTHAGE had her money kings that spoiled
the seven seas,
Trusts that stole and slew and lied and lusted at
their ease,
Wholesale hired their soldiery, safety bought with
shame,
Tempted Rome to war with them and sank in blood
and flame.

Rome that thinned her legions' blood learned to
decimate
Valor of her pioneers that made her strong and great,
Formed her Caesars' body-guards of aliens; paid
them well,
Lost the art of war herself and then went down to
hell.

Likewise in Byzantium we were Varangars,
Ruin and revolt repulsed, and tribute took for scars,
Milked the gambling houses dry, and taxed the
prostitute,
Saw the church complacent eye our long campaign of
loot.

Now we pay praetorians, Irish, Germans, Jews;
Do our stealing wholesale and their protection use;
Let them scare the little thieves and lock them up
 for life,
If they won't divide the graft; let them hold the knife

To our own throats now and then, reckless in our haste;
Let them tax the powers that prey, spoil, defile and
 waste;
Let them make their red machines the image of our
 own.
(So we have to compromise where once we thieved
 alone).

After us the deluge. Shameless in our greed,
Nero and Caligula, we our people bleed.
Roundsmen and praetorians who have learned the
 game,
Goad the slums to savagery: all human and the same.

Messalina motors past, our predestined mate.
Arabs, Kaffirs, Japanese look and lust and hate.
Shadows of their airship swarms fall athwart our sky.
Manhood, freedom for our sons our money may not
 buy.

Paris, 11' 26 '08.

THE HOME

WELL our Paradise was lost;
Sinless Eden made our own
Wistfully in dreams alone;
Hut of snow in polar frost,
Cave or tent or open sky,
Where we trysted, you and I:
Eden found in children's smiles.

Love, the endless weary miles
That our restless race has trod
On its road that leads to God
Still are urgent incomplete.
Still the murmur of the sea
Makes our moments' threnody:
Life so short and life so sweet.

Well our Paradise was won;
Shadow in the tropic sun,
Castle warm in winter's cold,
Harbor where our hearts shall hold
Cables sure a little space;
Shrine that sanctifies your face
And the child that looks to you.

The Home

Dear, if anything is true,
Dear, if anything is dear,
We shall find our treasure here.
In the city's shadowed hells
Something sacred somewhere dwells.
Dear, if anything is strong
We shall save them who belong
To our Captain's body-guard—
Life so sweet and life so hard.

S. S. Marama, 3' 31 '09.

THE UNFIT

WE lacked the purpose long avowed,
The master's will, the hero's soul.
We walked and slumbered with the crowd.
We lagged and lost the distant goal.

Begotten of essential brute,
Betrayed by error, want and vice,
And baffled by each blind pursuit,
Your burden and your sacrifice:

We are your very flesh and blood.
To us your children spoiled revert;
Since tides must ebb that have their flood.
And more than us your own you hurt;

Who blindly waste the wine of life,
Who crush its bubbles, scorn its scent;
Who busy in your breathless strife
Would mutilate a continent.

Since you have bound and crippled us
Blinded and bought, yourselves you maim.
We judge you false and covetous
Since we are human, and the same.

The Unfit

We have not learned to earn our joy.
We dream a little and forget.
Children of chaos, girl and boy.
We are not fit to suffer yet.

So have you thrust us toward the pit,
Not ours the fault alone we know.
We are unready and unfit,
We are your youth. And we shall grow.

San Francisco, 6' 4 '09.

THE SLUM

YOU have watered the primitive out of your lives.
From the passive embraces of children and wives

You race to the ticker. You 've narrowed the sea,
Sawed the forests to matchwood; and cycles to be
The fruit of your haste shall enjoy at their ease,
And the nature you hunt from the mountains and trees
That you hustle and stunt, doubles back to us here.
We are cave-men primeval with faces of fear.

And wild eyes you have lured from Armenian hills
And from Sicily's valleys, and hot hate that kills
That we nurse in our hearts, in our gray granite hive
When your cold blood grows thin shall yet keep you
alive.

Stop and look at our life, its crowds, color and smells,
Its law of the jungle, its homes that are hells.

We 're alive there though. You in your blank brown-
stone blocks,

And their bleakness that blinds you to shadows and
shocks,

And to high lights and harmony; culture that dwells
In apartment hotels that are life's prison cells,
And is proud not to know its next door neighbor's
name,

You are cliff-dwellers too, and our tribe is the same.

You are cowards. Convention's your castle and creed.

And you live in its limbo. We; sickness and need
Have taught us our joys and our sorrows to share
With our money and matches. You hoard yours. Be
fair,

Try to focus the picture, the Master's last word,
Big, impressionistic. Come down and be stirred
By our poets, our prayers. Come to grips with our
graft,

For its germs breed in you, and we're all in one craft.
We're the scum of creation? Salvation shall come
For the race, for the nation, for all from the slum.

Paris, 11' 16 '08.

THE IRON CREED

WE are heirs of evolution and children of to-day,
And from our own environment we may not
break away.

We may not sing like Homer gray, Olympus crowned
with snow,

And gods and demigods who war with men on earth
below.

We may not love as Dante did nor paint with Raph-
ael's hand,

For the mountains are brought low to-day; the plains,
the sands expand.

We may not cry the martyr's creed and soar on wings
of flame.

We may not live as hermits to adore one awful Name.

We may not love one woman now and count the world
well lost,

We may not save our single souls at all creation's cost.

Life has demanded more of us for it has given more.
Though still the holy mountains call the soul to climb
and soar.

We may not live transfigured there, we may not love
alone,

We must come down and strive with men and make
their cause our own.

No more than bodies starved or maimed, may minds,
may spirits fast,
Efficiency becomes the creed of all the world at last.
Salvation's price is greater now since life is more than
death,
As a searchlight in the storm excels an altar candle's
breath.
Our God to-day has many names, our heaven is power
applied.
Our hell the city's shams and shames, the waste of
life denied.

We have lost our last illusion, childhood of the race,
The golden age that never was, the golden stairs of
grace,
Sinless heaven freely given, harbor safe at last,
Life means wave on wave of storm and calm to strug-
gle past.
Sleep of death like earth in winter, growth that never
ends,
Love like radium whose rays make all the world its
friends.
Morning's shadows fade. The world must toil through
noonday's blaze,
Yet one living parable shall gladden iron days.
Golden age forever safe in laughter of a child.
Heaven smiled. Hell has them now who have that
smile defiled.

Paris, 12' 9 '08.

THE MESSAGE

WHAT does it all mean? Simply this,
Out of the blackness of the night
Where planets swarm and suns expire;
Sparks from the one eternal light,
And voices of creation's choir
We come to solve our share of bliss.

We come to sound the human scale,
To strive and suffer, seek and smile,
From sorrow's lowest depths to soar
To perfect joy a little while;
Before our singing sounds no more
To hear one echo ere we fail.

We come to kindle light divine
In eyes unborn and blind and dim,
Till risen spirits wake and see
Some vision strong of seraphim,
That war on earth eternally
And human life with heaven align.

We come to live and love and learn;
The vast of space to comprehend,
The atom's essence to explore,
The mind's dominion to extend;
To war with darkness more and more
While heaven's beacons brighter burn.

The Message

We come to live and learn and love;
To hush and raise to harmony
The discords harsh of sin and pain,
To merge the past and time to be
Within one vibrant heart and brain;
And singing clear, to soar above.

Paris, 11' 19 '08.

ENVOY

THE IRON MUSE

DAREST, I saw the city of the dead,
The shadowed streets of space; each starry
light

Where the great souls that conquered storm and night
And cold that stills the heart, that stumbled, bled,
And rose from sin and shame, eternally
Stride on the Master's errands; nor regret
The loves they left on earth, that might not be;
Though in their dreams they see us dimly yet.
And linking earth and heaven and hell's unstarred
abyssm, I saw
The iron strands of one supreme unalterable law.

Midnight His smithy is. The lightnings are
Sparks from His forge. His anvil earth. At dawn
His fire flames forth, His steel is shaped and drawn;
And men His patterns learn to make or mar
In freedom's likeness. So our fathers wrought
His image in the name of Liberty;
And thought the idol that their blood had bought
Forever should be spotless, strong and free.

We who are sad and stained; who stronger still
through struggle grow;
Freedom that rests not from her war forever, learn to
know.

Dearest, there may be planets younger yet;
Americas unborn may wait us there,
New worlds to win, more fertile and more fair,
Where we our earthly warfare shall forget;
Where pain and shame may seem a little thing,
Like joy and triumph done with long ago;
And love itself a song too old to sing,
When we the fulness of God's heavens shall know.
It may be so above; below to-day our dwelling-place
Time-stained and strong, grows ever dearer, fairer,
like your face.



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